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THEORY OF ÆSTHETIC

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ÆSTHETIC

AS SCIENCE OF EXPRESSION AND GENERAL LINGUISTIC

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN
OF BENEDETTO CROCE

BY

DOUGLAS AINSLIE
B.A. (Oxon.)

68815

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THE

ÆSTHETIC

IS DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR

TO THE MEMORY OF HIS PARENTS

PASQUALE AND LUISA SIPARI

AND OF HIS SISTER

MARIA

NOTE

I GIVE here a close translation of the complete *Theory of Æsthetic*, and in the Historical Summary, with the consent of the author, an abbreviation of the historical portion of the original work.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE are always Americas to be discovered: the most interesting in Europe.

I can lay no claim to having discovered an America, but I do claim to have discovered a Columbus. His name is Benedetto Croce, and he dwells on the shores of the Mediterranean, at Naples, city of the antique Parthenope.

Croce's America cannot be expressed in geographical terms. It is more important than any space of mountain and river, of forest and dale. It belongs to the kingdom of the spirit, and has many provinces. That province which most interests me, I have striven in the following pages to annex to the possessions of the Anglo-Saxon race; an act which cannot be blamed as predatory, since it may be said of philosophy more truly than of love, that "to divide is not to take away."

The Historical Summary will show how many a brave adventurer has navigated the perilous seas of speculation upon Art, how Aristotle's marvellous insight gave him glimpses of its beauty, how Plato threw away its golden fruit, how Baumgarten sounded the depth of its waters, Kant sailed along its coast without landing, and Vico hoisted the Italian flag upon its shore.

But Benedetto Croce has been the first thoroughly to explore it, cutting his way inland through the tangled undergrowth of imperfect thought. He has measured its length and breadth, marked out and described its spiritual features with minute accuracy. The country thus won to philosophy will always bear his name, *Estetica di Croce*, a new America.

It was at Naples, in the winter of 1907, that I first saw the Philosopher of Æsthetic. Benedetto Croce, although born in the Abruzzi, Province of Aquila (1866), is essentially a Neapolitan, and rarely remains long absent from the city, on the shore of that magical sea, where once Ulysses sailed, and where sometimes yet (near Amalfi) we may hear the Syrens sing their song. But more wonderful than the song of any Syren seems to me the Theory of Æsthetic as the Science of Expression, and that is why I have overcome the obstacles that stood between me and the giving of this theory, which in my belief is the truth, to the English-speaking world.

No one could have been further removed than myself, as I turned over at Naples the pages of *La Critica*, from any idea that I was nearing the solution of the problem of Art. All my youth it had haunted me. As an undergraduate at Oxford I had caught the exquisite cadence of Walter Pater's speech, as it came from his very lips, or rose like the perfume of some exotic flower from the ribbed pages of the *Renaissance*.

Seeming to solve the riddle of the Sphinx, he solved it not—only delighted with pure pleasure of poetry and of subtle thought as he led one along the pathways of his Enchanted Garden, where I shall always love to tread.

Oscar Wilde, too, I had often heard at his best, the most brilliant talker of our time, his wit flashing in the spring sunlight of Oxford luncheon-parties as now in his beautiful writings, like the jewelled rapier of Mercutio. But his works, too, will be searched in vain by the seeker after definite æsthetic truth.

With A. C. Swinburne I had sat and watched the lava that yet flowed from those lips that were kissed in youth by all the Muses. Neither from him nor from J. M. Whistler's brilliant aphorisms on art could be gathered anything more than the exquisite pleasure of the moment: the *μονοχρονὸς ἡδονή*. Of the great pedagogues, I had known, but never sat at the feet of Jowett, whom I found far less inspiring than any of the great men above mentioned. Among the dead, I had studied Herbert Spencer and Matthew Arnold, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Guyau: I had conversed with that living Neo-Latin, Anatole France, the modern Rousseau, and had enjoyed the marvellous irony and eloquence of his writings, which, while they delight the society in which he lives, may well be one of the causes that lead to its eventual destruction.

The solution of the problem of Æsthetic is not in the gift of the Muses.

To return to Naples. As I looked over those pages of the bound volumes of *La Critica* I soon became aware that I was in the presence of a mind far above the ordinary level of literary criticism. The profound studies of Carducci, of d'Annunzio, and of Pascoli (to name but three), in which those writers passed before me in all their strength and in all their weakness, led me to devote several days to the *Critica*. At the end of that time I was convinced that I had made a

discovery, and wrote to the philosopher, who owns and edits that journal.

In response to his invitation, I made my way, on a sunny day in November, past the little shops of the coral-vendors that surround, like a necklace, the Rione de la Bellezza, and wound zigzag along the over-crowded Toledo. I knew that Signor Croce lived in the old part of the town, but had hardly anticipated so remarkable a change as I experienced on passing beneath the great archway and finding myself in old Naples. This has already been described elsewhere, and I will not here dilate upon this world within a world, having so much of greater interest to tell in a brief space. I will merely say that the costumes here seemed more picturesque, the dark eyes flashed more dangerously than elsewhere, there was a quaint life, an animation about the streets, different from anything I had known before. As I climbed the lofty stone steps of the Palazzo to the floor where dwells the philosopher of Æsthetic I felt as though I had stumbled into the eighteenth century and were calling on Giambattista Vico. After a brief inspection by a young man with the appearance of a secretary, I was told that I was expected, and admitted into a small room opening out of the hall. Thence, after a few moments' waiting, I was led into a much larger room. The walls were lined all round with bookcases, barred and numbered, filled with volumes forming part of the philosopher's great library. I had not long to wait. A door opened behind me on my left, and a rather short, thick-set man advanced to greet me, and pronouncing my name at the same time with a slight foreign accent, asked me to be seated beside him. After the interchange of a few

brief formulæ of politeness in French, our conversation was carried on in Italian, and I had a better opportunity of studying my host's air and manner. His hands he held clasped before him, but frequently released them, to make those vivid gestures with which Neapolitans frequently clinch their phrase. His most remarkable feature was his eyes, of a greenish grey: extraordinary eyes, not for beauty, but for their fathomless depth, and for the sympathy which one felt welling up in them from the soul beneath. This was especially noticeable as our conversation fell upon the question of Art and upon the many problems bound up with it. I do not know how long that first interview lasted, but it seemed a few minutes only, during which was displayed before me a vast panorama of unknown height and headland, of league upon league of forest, with its bright-winged birds of thought flying from tree to tree down the long avenues into the dim blue vistas of the unknown.

I returned with my brain awhirl, as though I had been in fairyland, and when I looked at the second edition of the *Estetica*, with his inscription, I was sure of it.

These lines will suffice to show how the translation of the *Estetica* originated from the acquaintance thus formed, which has developed into friendship. I will now make brief mention of Benedetto Croce's other work, especially in so far as it throws light upon the *Æsthetic*. For this purpose, besides articles in Italian and German reviews, I have made use of the excellent monograph on the philosopher, by G. Prezzolini.[1]

First, then, it will be well to point out that the

[1] Napoli, Riccardo Ricciardi, 1909.

Æsthetic forms part of a complete philosophical system, to which the author gives the general title of "Philosophy of the Spirit." The *Æsthetic* is the first of the three volumes. The second is the *Logic*, the third the *Philosophy of the Practical.*

In the *Logic*, as elsewhere in the system, Croce combats that false conception, by which natural science, in the shape of psychology, makes claim to philosophy, and formal logic to absolute value. The thesis of the *pure concept* cannot be discussed here. It is connected with the logic of evolution as discovered by Hegel, and is the only logic which contains in itself the interpretation and the continuity of reality. Bergson in his *L'Evolution Créatrice* deals with logic in a somewhat similar manner. I recently heard him lecture on the distinction between spirit and matter at the Collège de France, and those who read French and Italian will find that both Croce's *Logic* and the book above mentioned by the French philosopher will amply repay their labour. The conception of nature as something lying outside the spirit which informs it, as the non-being which aspires to being, underlies all Croce's thought, and we find constant reference to it throughout his philosophical system.

With regard to the third volume, the *Philosophy of the Practical*, it is impossible here to give more than a hint of its treasures. I merely refer in passing to the treatment of the will, which is posited as a unity *inseparable from the volitional act.* For Croce there is no difference between action and intention, means and end: they are one thing, inseparable as the intuition-expression of Æsthetic. The *Philosophy of the Practical* is a logic and science of the will, not a

normative science. Just as in Æsthetic the individuality of expression made models and rules impossible, so in practical life the individuality of action removes the possibility of catalogues of virtues, of the exact application of laws, of the existence of practical judgments and judgments of value *previous to action.*

The reader will probably ask here: But what, then, becomes of morality? The question will be found answered in the *Theory of Æsthetic*, and I will merely say here that Croce's thesis of the *double degree* of the practical activity, economic and moral, is one of the greatest contributions to modern thought. Just as it is proved in the *Theory of Æsthetic* that the *concept* depends upon the *intuition*, which is the first degree, the primary and indispensable thing, so it is proved in the *Philosophy of the Practical* that *Morality* or *Ethic* depends upon *Economic*, which is the *first* degree of the practical activity. The volitional act is *always economic*, but true freedom of the will exists and consists in conforming not merely to economic, but to moral conditions, to the human spirit, which is greater than any individual. Here we are face to face with the ethics of Christianity, to which Croce accords all honour.

This Philosophy of the Spirit is symptomatic of the happy reaction of the twentieth century against the crude materialism of the second half of the nineteenth. It is the spirit which gives to the work of art its value, not this or that method of arrangement, this or that tint or cadence, which can always be copied by skilful plagiarists: not so the *spirit* of the creator. In England we hear too much of (natural) science, which has usurped the very name of Philosophy. The

natural sciences are very well in their place, but discoveries such as aviation are of infinitely less importance to the race than the smallest addition to the philosophy of the spirit. Empirical science, with the collusion of positivism, has stolen the cloak of philosophy and must be made to give it back.

Among Croce's other important contributions to thought must be mentioned his definition of History as being æsthetic and differing from Art solely in that history represents the *real*, art the *possible*. In connection with this definition and its proof, the philosopher recounts how he used to hold an opposite view. Doing everything thoroughly, he had prepared and written out a long disquisition on this thesis, which was already in type, when suddenly, from the midst of his meditations, *the truth flashed upon him*. He saw for the first time clearly that history cannot be a science, since, like art, it always deals with the particular. Without a moment's hesitation he hastened to the printers and bade them break up the type.

This incident is illustrative of the sincerity and good faith of Benedetto Croce. One knows him to be severe for the faults and weaknesses of others, merciless for his own.

Yet though severe, the editor of *La Critica* is uncompromisingly just, and would never allow personal dislike or jealousy, or any extrinsic consideration, to stand in the way of fair treatment to the writer concerned. Many superficial English critics might benefit considerably by attention to this quality in one who is in other respects also so immeasurably their superior. A good instance of this impartiality is his critique of Schopenhauer, with whose system he is in complete

disagreement, yet affords him full credit for what of truth is contained in his voluminous writings.[1]

Croce's education was largely completed in Germany, and on account of their thoroughness he has always been an upholder of German methods. One of his complaints against the Italian Positivists is that they only read second-rate works in French or at the most "the dilettante booklets published in such profusion by the Anglo-Saxon press." This tendency towards German thought, especially in philosophy, depends upon the fact of the former undoubted supremacy of Germany in that field, but Croce does not for a moment admit the inferiority of the Neo-Latin races, and adds with homely humour in reference to Germany, that we "must not throw away the baby with the bath-water"! Close, arduous study and clear thought are the only key to scientific (philosophical) truth, and Croce never begins an article for a newspaper without the complete collection of the works of the author to be criticized, and his own elaborate notes on the table before him. Schopenhauer said there were three kinds of writers—those who write without thinking, the great majority; those who think while they write, not very numerous; those who write after they have thought, very rare. Croce certainly belongs to the last division, and, as I have said, always feeds his thought upon complete erudition. The bibliography of the works consulted for the *Estetica* alone, as printed at the end of the Italian edition, extends to many pages and contains references to works in any way dealing with the subject in all the European languages. For instance, Croce has studied

[1] The reader will find this critique summarized in the historical portion of this volume.

Mr. B. Bosanquet's eclectic works on Æsthetic, largely based upon German sources and by no means without value. But he takes exception to Mr. Bosanquet's statement that *he* has consulted all works of importance on the subject of Æsthetic. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bosanquet reveals his ignorance of the greater part of the contribution to Æsthetic made by the Neo-Latin races, which the reader of this book will recognize as of first-rate importance.

This thoroughness it is which gives such importance to the literary and philosophical criticisms of *La Critica*. Croce's method is always historical, and his object in approaching any work of art is to classify the spirit of its author, as expressed in that work. There are, he maintains, but two things to be considered in criticizing a book. These are, *firstly*, what is its *peculiarity*, in what way is it singular, how is it differentiated from other works? *Secondly*, what is its degree of *purity*?—That is, to what extent has its author kept himself free from all considerations alien to the perfection of the work as an expression, as a lyrical intuition? With the answering of these questions Croce is satisfied. He does not care to know if the author keep a motor-car, like Maeterlinck; or prefer to walk on Putney Heath, like Swinburne. This amounts to saying that all works of art must be judged by their own standard. How far has the author succeeded in doing what he intended?

Croce is far above any personal animus, although the same cannot be said of those he criticizes. These, like d'Annunzio, whose limitations he points out—his egoism, his lack of human sympathy—are often very bitter, and accuse the penetrating critic of want of

courtesy. This seriousness of purpose runs like a golden thread through all Croce's work. The flimsy superficial remarks on poetry and fiction which too often pass for criticism in England (Scotland is a good deal more thorough) are put to shame by *La Critica*, the study of which I commend to all readers who read or wish to read Italian.[1] They will find in its back numbers a complete picture of a century of Italian literature, besides a store-house of philosophical criticism. The *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews* are our only journals which can be compared to *The Critica*, and they are less exhaustive on the philosophical side. We should have to add to these *Mind* and the *Hibbert Journal* to get even an approximation to the scope of the Italian review.

As regards Croce's general philosophical position, it is important to understand that he is *not* a Hegelian, in the sense of being a close follower of that philosopher. One of his last works is that in which he deals in a masterly manner with the philosophy of Hegel. The title may be translated, "What is living and what is dead of the philosophy of Hegel." Here he explains to us the Hegelian system more clearly than that wondrous edifice was ever before explained, and we realize at the same time that Croce is quite as independent of Hegel as of Kant, of Vico as of Spinoza. Of course he has made use of the best of Hegel, just as every thinker makes use of his predecessors and is in his turn made use of by those that follow him. But it is incorrect to accuse of Hegelianism the author of an anti-hegelian *Æsthetic*, of a *Logic* where Hegel is only half accepted, and of a *Philosophy of the Practical*,

[1] *La Critica* is published every other month by Laterza of Bari.

which contains hardly a trace of Hegel. I give an instance. If the great conquest of Hegel be the dialectic of opposites, his great mistake lies in the confusion of opposites with things which are distinct but not opposite. If, says Croce, we take as an example the application of the Hegelian triad that formulates becoming (affirmation, negation and synthesis), we find it applicable for those opposites which are true and false, good and evil, being and not-being, but *not applicable* to things which are distinct but not opposite, such as art and philosophy, beauty and truth, the useful and the moral. These confusions led Hegel to talk of the death of art, to conceive as possible a Philosophy of History, and to the application of the natural sciences to the absurd task of constructing a Philosophy of Nature. Croce has cleared away these difficulties by shewing that if from the meeting of opposites must arise a superior synthesis, such a synthesis cannot arise from things which are distinct *but not opposite*, since the former are connected together as superior and inferior, and the inferior can exist without the superior, but *not vice versa*. Thus we see how philosophy cannot exist without art, while art, occupying the lower place, can and does exist without philosophy. This brief example reveals Croce's independence in dealing with Hegelian problems.

I know of no philosopher more generous than Croce in praise and elucidation of other workers in the same field, past and present. For instance, and apart from Hegel, *Kant* has to thank him for drawing attention to the marvellous excellence of the *Critique of Judgment*, generally neglected in favour of the Critiques of *Pure Reason and of Practical Judgment*;

Baumgarten for drawing the attention of the world to his obscure name and for reprinting his Latin thesis in which the word *Æsthetic* occurs for the first time; and *Schleiermacher* for the tributes paid to his neglected genius in the History of Æsthetic. *La Critica*, too, is full of generous appreciation of contemporaries by Croce and by that profound thinker, Gentile.

But it is not only philosophers who have reason to be grateful to Croce for his untiring zeal and diligence. Historians, economists, poets, actors, and writers of fiction have been rescued from their undeserved limbo by this valiant Red Cross knight, and now shine with due brilliance in the circle of their peers. It must also be admitted that a large number of false lights, popular will o' the wisps, have been ruthlessly extinguished with the same breath. For instance, Karl Marx, the socialist theorist and agitator, finds in Croce an exponent of his views, in so far as they are based upon the truth, but where he blunders, his critic immediately reveals the origin and nature of his mistakes. Croce's studies in Economic are chiefly represented by his work, the title of which may be translated " Historical Materialism and Marxist Economic."

To indicate the breadth and variety of Croce's work I will mention the further monograph on the sixteenth century Neapolitan Pulcinella (the original of our Punch), and the personage of the Neapolitan in comedy, a monument of erudition and of acute and of lively dramatic criticism, that would alone have occupied an ordinary man's activity for half a lifetime. One must remember, however, that Croce's average working day is of ten hours. His interest is concentrated on things of the mind, and although he sits on several Royal Com-

missions, such as those of the Archives of all Italy and of the monument to King Victor Emmanuel, he has taken no university degree, and much dislikes any affectation of academic superiority. He is ready to meet any one on equal terms and try with them to get at the truth on any subject, be it historical, literary, or philosophical. "Truth," he says, "is democratic," and I can testify that the search for it, in his company, is very stimulating. As is well said by Prezzolini, "He has a new word for all."

There can be no doubt of the great value of Croce's work as an *educative influence*, and if we are to judge of a philosophical system by its action on others, then we must place the *Philosophy of the Spirit* very high. It may be said with perfect truth that since the death of the poet Carducci there has been no influence in Italy to compare with that of Benedetto Croce.

His dislike of Academies and of all forms of prejudice runs parallel with his breadth and sympathy with all forms of thought. His activity in the present is only equalled by his reverence for the past. Naples he loves with the blind love of the child for its parent, and he has been of notable assistance to such Neapolitan talent as is manifested in the works of Salvatore di Giacomo, whose best poems are written in the dialect of Naples, or rather in a dialect of his own, which Croce had difficulty in persuading the author always to retain. The original jet of inspiration having been in dialect, it is clear that to amend this inspiration at the suggestion of wiseacres at the Café would have been to ruin it altogether.

Of the popularity that his system and teaching have already attained we may judge by the fact that the

Æsthetic,[1] despite the difficulty of the subject, is already in its third edition in Italy, where, owing to its influence, philosophy sells better than fiction; while the French and Germans, not to mention the Czechs, have long had translations of the earlier editions. His *Logic* is on the point of appearing in its second edition, and I have no doubt that the *Philosophy of the Practical* will eventually equal these works in popularity. *The importance and value of Italian thought have been too long neglected in Great Britain.* Where, as in Benedetto Croce, we get the clarity of vision of the Latin, joined to the thoroughness and erudition of the best German tradition, we have a combination of rare power and effectiveness, which can by no means be neglected.

The philosopher feels that he has a great mission, which is nothing less than the leading back of thought to belief in the spirit, deserted by so many for crude empiricism and positivism. His view of philosophy is that it sums up all the higher human activities, including religion, and that in proper hands it is able to solve any problem. But there is no finality about problems: the solution of one leads to the posing of another, and so on. Man is the maker of life, and his spirit ever proceeds from a lower to a higher perfection. Connected with this view of life is Croce's dislike of "Modernism." When once a problem has been correctly solved, it is absurd to return to the same problem. Roman Catholicism cannot march with the times. It

[1] This translation is made from the third Italian edition (Bari, 1909), enlarged and corrected by the author. The *Theory of Æsthetic* first appeared in 1900 in the form of a communication to the *Accademia Pontiana* of Naples, vol. xxx. The first edition is dated 1902, the second 1904 (Palermo).

can only exist by being conservative—its only Logic is to be illogical. Therefore, Croce is opposed to Loisy and Neo-Catholicism, and supports the Encyclical against Modernism. The Catholic religion, with its great stores of myth and morality, which for many centuries was the best thing in the world, is still there for those who are unable to assimilate other food. Another instance of his dislike for Modernism is his criticism of Pascoli, whose attempts to reveal enigmas in the writings of Dante he looks upon as useless. We do not, he says, read Dante in the twentieth century for his hidden meanings, but for his revealed poetry.

I believe that Croce will one day be recognized as one of the very few great teachers of humanity. At present he is not appreciated at nearly his full value. One rises from a study of his philosophy with a sense of having been all the time as it were in personal touch with the truth, which is very far from the case after the perusal of certain other philosophies.

Croce has been called the philosopher-poet, and if we take philosophy as Novalis understood it, certainly Croce does belong to the poets, though not to the formal category of those who write in verse. Croce is at any rate a born philosopher, and as every trade tends to make its object prosaic, so does every vocation tend to make it poetic. Yet no one has toiled more earnestly than Croce. "Thorough" might well be his motto, and if to-day he is admitted to be a classic without the stiffness one connects with that term, be sure he has well merited the designation. His name stands for the best that Italy has to give the world of serious, stimulating thought. I know nothing to equal it elsewhere.

Secure in his strength, Croce will often introduce a joke or some amusing illustration from contemporary life, in the midst of a most profound and serious argument. This spirit of mirth is a sign of superiority. He who is not sure of himself can spare no energy for the making of mirth. Croce loves to laugh at his enemies and with his friends. So the philosopher of Naples sits by the blue gulf and explains the universe to those who have ears to hear. "One can philosophize anywhere," he says—but he remains significantly at Naples.

Thus I conclude these brief remarks upon the author of the *Æsthetic*, confident that those who give time and attention to its study will be grateful for having placed in their hands this pearl of great price from the diadem of the antique Parthenope.

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I

INTUITION AND EXPRESSION

HUMAN knowledge has two forms: it is either intuitive knowledge or logical knowledge; knowledge obtained through the imagination or knowledge obtained through the intellect; knowledge of the individual or knowledge of the universal; of individual things or of the relations between them: it is, in fact, productive either of images or of concepts. *Intuitive knowledge.*

In ordinary life, constant appeal is made to intuitive knowledge. It is said to be impossible to give expression to certain truths; that they are not demonstrable by syllogisms; that they must be learnt intuitively. The politician finds fault with the abstract reasoner, who is without a lively knowledge of actual conditions; the pedagogue insists upon the necessity of developing the intuitive faculty in the pupil before everything else; the critic in judging a work of

art makes it a point of honour to set aside theory and abstractions, and to judge it by direct intuition; the practical man professes to live rather by intuition than by reason.

But this ample acknowledgment, granted to intuitive knowledge in ordinary life, does not meet with an equal and adequate acknowledgment in the field of theory and of philosophy. There exists a very ancient science of intellective knowledge, admitted by all without discussion, namely, Logic; but a science of intuitive knowledge is timidly and with difficulty admitted by but a few. Logical knowledge has appropriated the lion's share; and if she does not quite slay and devour her companion, yet yields to her with difficulty the humble little place of maid-servant or doorkeeper. What, it says, is intuitive knowledge without the light of intellective knowledge? It is a servant without a master; and though a master find a servant useful, the master is a necessity to the servant, since he enables him to gain his livelihood. Intuition is blind; intellect lends her eyes.

Its independence in respect to intellective knowledge.

Now, the first point to be firmly fixed in the mind is that intuitive knowledge has no need of a master, nor to lean upon any one; she does not need to borrow the eyes of others, for she

has most excellent eyes of her own. Doubtless it is possible to find concepts mingled with intuitions. But in many other intuitions there is no trace of such a mixture, which proves that it is not necessary. The impression of a moonlight scene by a painter; the outline of a country drawn by a cartographer; a musical motive, tender or energetic; the words of a sighing lyric, or those with which we ask, command and lament in ordinary life, may well all be intuitive facts without a shadow of intellective relation. But, think what one may of these instances, and admitting further that one may maintain that the greater part of the intuitions of civilized man are impregnated with concepts, there yet remains to be observed something more important and more conclusive. Those concepts which are found mingled and fused with the intuitions, are no longer concepts, in so far as they are really mingled and fused, for they have lost all independence and autonomy. They have been concepts, but they have now become simple elements of intuition. The philosophical maxims placed in the mouth of a personage of tragedy or of comedy, perform there the function, not of concepts, but of characteristics of such personage; in the same way as the red in a painted

figure does not there represent the red colour of the physicists, but is a characteristic element of the portrait. The whole it is that determines the quality of the parts. A work of art may be full of philosophical concepts; it may contain them in greater abundance and they may be there even more profound than in a philosophical dissertation, which in its turn may be rich to overflowing with descriptions and intuitions. But, notwithstanding all these concepts it may contain, the result of the work of art is an intuition; and notwithstanding all those intuitions, the result of the philosophical dissertation is a concept. The *Promessi Sposi* contains copious ethical observations and distinctions, but it does not for that reason lose in its total effect its character of simple story, of intuition. In like manner the anecdotes and satirical effusions which may be found in the works of a philosopher like Schopenhauer, do not remove from those works their character of intellective treatises. The difference between a scientific work and a work of art, that is, between an intellective fact and an intuitive fact lies in the result, in the diverse effect aimed at by their respective authors. This it is that determines and rules over the several parts of each.

Intuition and perception.

But to admit the independence of intuition as regards concept does not suffice to give a true and precise idea of intuition. Another error arises among those who recognize this, or who, at any rate, do not make intuition explicitly dependent upon the intellect. This error obscures and confounds the real nature of intuition. By intuition is frequently understood the *perception* or knowledge of actual reality, the apprehension of something as *real.*

Certainly perception is intuition: the perception of the room in which I am writing, of the ink-bottle and paper that are before me, of the pen I am using, of the objects that I touch and make use of as instruments of my person, which, if it write, therefore exists;—these are all intuitions. But the image that is now passing through my brain of a me writing in another room, in another town, with different paper, pen and ink, is also an intuition. This means that the distinction between reality and non-reality is extraneous, secondary, to the true nature of intuition. If we assume the existence of a human mind which should have intuitions for the first time, it would seem that it could have intuitions of effective reality only, that is to say, that it could have perceptions of nothing

but the real. But if the knowledge of reality be based upon the distinction between real images and unreal images, and if this distinction does not originally exist, these intuitions would in truth not be intuitions either of the real or of the unreal, but pure intuitions. Where all is real, nothing is real. The child, with its difficulty of distinguishing true from false, history from fable, which are all one to childhood, can furnish us with a sort of very vague and only remotely approximate idea of this ingenuous state. Intuition is the indifferentiated unity of the perception of the real and of the simple image of the possible. In our intuitions we do not oppose ourselves to external reality as empirical beings, but we simply objectify our impressions, whatever they be.

Those, therefore, who look upon intuition as sensation formed and arranged simply according to the categories of space and time, would seem to approximate more nearly to the truth. Space and time (they say) are the forms of intuition; to have intuitions is to place in space and in temporal sequence. Intuitive activity would then consist in this double and concurrent function of spatiality and temporality. But for these two categories must be repeated what

was said of intellectual distinctions, found mingled with intuitions. We have intuitions without space and without time: a tint of sky and a tint of sentiment, an Ah! of pain and an effort of will, objectified in consciousness. These are intuitions, which we possess, and with their making, space and time have nothing to do. In some intuitions, spatiality may be found without temporality, in others, this without that; and even where both are found, they are perceived by posterior reflexion: they can be fused with the intuition in like manner with all its other elements: that is, they are in it *materialiter* and not *formaliter*, as ingredients and not as essentials. Who, without a similar act of interruptive reflexion, is conscious of temporal sequence while listening to a story or a piece of music? That which intuition reveals in a work of art is not space and time, but character, individual physiognomy. Several attempts may be noted in modern philosophy, which confirm the view here exposed. Space and time, far from being very simple and primitive functions, are shown to be intellectual constructions of great complexity. And further, even in some of those who do not altogether deny to space and time the quality of forming or of categories and

functions, one may observe the attempt to unify and to understand them in a different manner from that generally maintained in respect of these categories. Some reduce intuition to the unique category of spatiality, maintaining that time also can only be conceived in terms of space. Others abandon the three dimensions of space as not philosophically necessary, and conceive the function of spatiality as void of every particular spatial determination. But what could such a spatial function be, that should control even time? May it not be a residuum of criticisms and of negations from which arises merely the necessity to posit a generic intuitive activity? And is not this last truly determined, when one unique function is attributed to it, not spatializing nor temporalizing, but characterizing? Or, better, when this is conceived as itself a category or function, which gives knowledge of things in their concretion and individuality?

Intuition and sensation.

Having thus freed intuitive knowledge from any suggestion of intellectualism and from every posterior and external adjunct, we must now make clear and determine its limits from another side and from a different kind of invasion and confusion. On the other side, and before the inferior boundary, is sensation, formless

matter, which the spirit can never apprehend in itself, in so far as it is mere matter. This it can only possess with form and in form, but postulates its concept as, precisely, a limit. Matter, in its abstraction, is mechanism, passivity; it is what the spirit of man experiences, but does not produce. Without it no human knowledge and activity is possible; but mere matter produces animality, whatever is brutal and impulsive in man, not the spiritual dominion, which is humanity. How often do we strive to understand clearly what is passing within us? We do catch a glimpse of something, but this does not appear to the mind as objectified and formed. In such moments it is, that we best perceive the profound difference between matter and form. These are not two acts of ours, face to face with one another; but we assault and carry off the one that is outside us, while that within us tends to absorb and make its own that without. Matter, attacked and conquered by form, gives place to concrete form. It is the matter, the content, that differentiates one of our intuitions from another: form is constant: it is spiritual activity, while matter is changeable. Without matter, however, our spiritual activity would not leave its abstraction to become concrete and real, this

or that spiritual content, this or that definite intuition.

It is a curious fact, characteristic of our times, that this very form, this very activity of the spirit, which is essentially ourselves, is so easily ignored or denied. Some confound the spiritual activity of man with the metaphorical and mythological activity of so-called nature, which is mechanism and has no resemblance to human activity, save when we imagine, with Æsop, that *arbores loquuntur non tantum ferae.* Some even affirm that they have never observed in themselves this "miraculous" activity, as though there were no difference, or only one of quantity, between sweating and thinking, feeling cold and the energy of the will. Others, certainly with greater reason, desire to unify activity and mechanism in a more general concept, though admitting that they are specifically distinct. Let us, however, refrain for the moment from examining if such a unification be possible, and in what sense, but admitting that the attempt may be made, it is clear that to unify two concepts in a third implies a difference between the two first. And here it is this difference that is of importance and we set it in relief.

Intuition and association.

Intuition has often been confounded with simple sensation. But, since this confusion is too

shocking to good sense, it has more frequently been attenuated or concealed with a phraseology which seems to wish to confuse and to distinguish them at the same time. Thus, it has been asserted that intuition is sensation, but not so much simple sensation as *association* of sensations. The equivoque arises precisely from the word "association." Association is understood, either as memory, mnemonic association, conscious recollection, and in that case is evident the absurdity of wishing to join together in memory elements which are not intuified, distinguished, possessed in some way by the spirit and produced by consciousness: or it is understood as association of unconscious elements. In this case we remain in the world of sensation and of nature. Further, if with certain associationists we speak of an association which is neither memory nor flux of sensations, but is a *productive* association (formative, constructive, distinguishing); then we admit the thing itself and deny only its name. In truth, productive association is no longer association in the sense of the sensualists, but *synthesis*, that is to say, spiritual activity. Synthesis may be called association; but with the concept of productivity is already posited the distinction

between passivity and activity, between sensation and intuition.

Intuition and representation.

Other psychologists are disposed to distinguish from sensation something which is sensation no longer, but is not yet intellective concept: *the representation or image.* What is the difference between their representation or image, and our intuitive knowledge? The greatest, and none at all. "Representation," too, is a very equivocal word. If by representation be understood something detached and standing out from the psychic base of the sensations, then representation is intuition. If, on the other hand, it be conceived as a complex sensation, a return is made to simple sensation, which does not change its quality according to its richness or poverty, operating alike in a rudimentary or in a developed organism full of traces of past sensations. Nor is the equivoque remedied by defining representation as a psychic product of secondary order in relation to sensation, which should occupy the first place. What does secondary order mean here? Does it mean a qualitative, a formal difference? If so, we agree: representation is elaboration of sensation, it is intuition. Or does it mean greater complexity and complication, a quantitative, material difference? In that case intuition

would be again confused with simple sensation.

Intuition and expression.

And yet there is a sure method of distinguishing true intuition, true representation, from that which is inferior to it: the spiritual fact from the mechanical, passive, natural fact. Every true intuition or representation is, also, *expression.* That which does not objectify itself in expression is not intuition or representation, but sensation and naturality. The spirit does not obtain intuitions, otherwise than by making, forming, expressing. He who separates intuition from expression never succeeds in reuniting them.

Intuitive activity possesses intuitions to the extent that it expresses them.—Should this expression seem at first paradoxical, that is chiefly because, as a general rule, a too restricted meaning is given to the word "expression." It is generally thought of as restricted to verbal expression. But there exist also non-verbal expressions, such as those of line, colour, and sound; to all of these must be extended our affirmation. The intuition and expression together of a painter are pictorial; those of a poet are verbal. But be it pictorial, or verbal, or musical, or whatever else it be called, to no intuition can expression be wanting, because it is an inseparable

part of intuition. How can we possess a true intuition of a geometrical figure, unless we possess so accurate an image of it as to be able to trace it immediately upon paper or on a slate? How can we have an intuition of the contour of a region, for example, of the island of Sicily, if we are not able to draw it as it is in all its meanderings? Every one can experience the internal illumination which follows upon his success in formulating to himself his impressions and sentiments, but only so far as he is able to formulate them. Sentiments or impressions, then, pass by means of words from the obscure region of the soul into the clarity of the contemplative spirit. In this cognitive process it is impossible to distinguish intuition from expression. The one is produced with the other at the same instant, because they are not two, but one.

Illusions as to their difference.

The principal reason which makes our theme appear paradoxical as we maintain it, is the illusion or prejudice that we possess a more complete intuition of reality than we really do. One often hears people say that they have in their minds many important thoughts, but that they are not able to express them. In truth, if they really had them, they would have coined them into beautiful, ringing words, and thus

expressed them. If these thoughts seem to vanish or to become scarce and poor in the act of expressing them, either they did not exist or they really were scarce and poor. People think that all of us ordinary men imagine and have intuitions of countries, figures and scenes, like painters; of bodies, like sculptors; save that painters and sculptors know how to paint and to sculpture those images, while we possess them only within our souls. They believe that anyone could have imagined a Madonna of Raphael; but that Raphael was Raphael owing to his technical ability in putting the Madonna upon the canvas. Nothing can be more false than this view. The world of which as a rule we have intuitions, is a small thing. It consists of little expressions which gradually become greater and more ample with the increasing spiritual concentration of certain moments. These are the sort of words which we speak within ourselves, the judgments that we tacitly express: "Here is a man, here is a horse, this is heavy, this is hard, this pleases me," etc. It is a medley of light and colour, which could not pictorially attain to any more sincere expression than a haphazard splash of colours, from among which would with difficulty stand out a few special, distinctive traits. This

and nothing else is what we possess in our ordinary life; this is the basis of our ordinary action. It is the index of a book. The labels tied to things take the place of the things themselves. This index and labels (which are themselves expressions) suffice for our small needs and small actions. From time to time we pass from the index to the book, from the label to the thing, or from the slight to the greater intuitions, and from these to the greatest and most lofty. This passage is sometimes far from being easy. It has been observed by those who have best studied the psychology of artists, that when, after having given a rapid glance at anyone, they attempt to obtain a true intuition of him, in order, for example, to paint his portrait, then this ordinary vision, that seemed so precise, so lively, reveals itself as little better than nothing. What remains is found to be at the most some superficial trait, which would not even suffice for a caricature. The person to be painted stands before the artist like a world to discover. Michael Angelo said, "one paints, not with one's hands, but with one's brain." Leonardo shocked the prior of the convent delle Grazie by standing for days together opposite the "Last Supper" without touching it with the brush. He

remarked of this attitude "that men of the most lofty genius, when they are doing the least work, are then the most active, seeking invention with their minds." The painter is a painter, because he sees what others only feel or catch a glimpse of, but do not see. We think we see a smile, but in reality we have only a vague impression of it, we do not perceive all the characteristic traits from which it results, as the painter perceives them after his internal meditations, which thus enable him to fix them on the canvas. Even in the case of our intimate friend, who is with us every day and at all hours, we do not possess intuitively more than, at the most, certain traits of his physiognomy, which enable us to distinguish him from others. The illusion is less easy as regards musical expression; because it would seem strange to everyone to say that the composer had added or attached notes to the motive, which is already in the mind of him who is not the composer. As if Beethoven's Ninth Symphony were not his own intuition and his own intuition the Ninth Symphony. Thus, just as he who is deceived as to his material wealth is confuted by arithmetic, which states its exact amount, so is he confuted who nourishes delusions as to the wealth of his own thoughts and images.

He is brought back to reality, when he is obliged to cross the Bridge of Asses of expression. We say to the former, count; to the latter, speak, here is a pencil, draw, express yourself.

We have each of us, as a matter of fact, a little of the poet, of the sculptor, of the musician, of the painter, of the prose writer: but how little, as compared with those who are so called, precisely because of the lofty degree in which they possess the most universal dispositions and energies of human nature! How little does a painter possess of the intuitions of a poet! How little does one painter possess those of another painter! Nevertheless, that little is all our actual patrimony of intuitions or representations. Beyond these are only impressions, sensations, feelings, impulses, emotions, or whatever else one may term what is outside the spirit, not assimilated by man, postulated for the convenience of exposition, but effectively inexistent, if existence be also a spiritual fact.

Identity of intuition and expression.

We may then add this to the verbal variants descriptive of intuition, noted at the beginning: intuitive knowledge is expressive knowledge, independent and autonomous in respect to intellectual function; indifferent to discriminations, posterior and empirical, to reality and to

unreality, to formations and perceptions of space and time, even when posterior: intuition or representation is distinguished as form from what is felt and suffered, from the flux or wave of sensation, or from psychic material; and this form, this taking possession of, is expression. To have an intuition is to express. It is nothing else (nothing more, but nothing less) than *to express.*

II

INTUITION AND ART

Corollaries and explanations.

BEFORE proceeding further, it seems opportune to draw certain consequences from what has been established and to add some explanation.

Identity of art and intuitive knowledge.

We have frankly identified intuitive or expressive knowledge with the æsthetic or artistic fact, taking works of art as examples of intuitive knowledge and attributing to them the characteristics of intuition, and *vice versa*. But our identification is combated by the view, held even by many philosophers, who consider art to be an intuition of an altogether special sort. "Let us admit" (they say) "that art is intuition; but intuition is not always art: artistic intuition is of a distinct species differing from intuition in general by something *more*."

No specific difference.

But no one has ever been able to indicate of what this something more consists. It has sometimes been thought that art is not a simple intuition, but an intuition of an intuition, in the

same way as the concept of science has been defined, not as the ordinary concept, but as the concept of a concept. Thus man should attain to art, by objectifying, not his sensations, as happens with ordinary intuition, but intuition itself. But this process of raising to a second power does not exist; and the comparison of it with the ordinary and scientific concept does not imply what is wished, for the good reason that it is not true that the scientific concept is the concept of a concept. If this comparison imply anything, it implies just the opposite. The ordinary concept, if it be really a concept and not a simple representation, is a perfect concept, however poor and limited. Science substitutes concepts for representations; it adds and substitutes other concepts larger and more comprehensive for those that are poor and limited. It is ever discovering new relations. But its method does not differ from that by which is formed the smallest universal in the brain of the humblest of men. What is generally called art, by antonomasia, collects intuitions that are wider and more complex than those which we generally experience, but these intuitions are always of sensations and impressions.

Art is the expression of impressions, not the expression of expressions.

No difference of intensity.

For the same reason, it cannot be admitted that intuition, which is generally called artistic, differs from ordinary intuition as to intensity. This would be the case if it were to operate differently on the same matter. But since artistic function is more widely distributed in different fields, but yet does not differ in method from ordinary intuition, the difference between the one and the other is not intensive but extensive. The intuition of the simplest popular love-song, which says the same thing, or very nearly, as a declaration of love such as issues at every moment from the lips of thousands of ordinary men, may be intensively perfect in its poor simplicity, although it be extensively so much more limited than the complex intuition of a love-song by Leopardi.

The difference is extensive and empirical.

The whole difference, then, is quantitative, and as such, indifferent to philosophy, *scientia qualitatum.* Certain men have a greater aptitude, a more frequent inclination fully to express certain complex states of the soul. These men are known in ordinary language as artists. Some very complicated and difficult expressions are more rarely achieved and these are called works of art. The limits of the expressions and intuitions that are called art, as opposed to those that are vulgarly called not-art, are empirical and

impossible to define. If an epigram be art, why not a single word? If a story; why not the occasional note of the journalist? If a landscape, why not a topographical sketch? The teacher of philosophy in Molière's comedy was right: "whenever we speak we create prose." But there will always be scholars like Monsieur Jourdain, astonished at having created prose for forty years without knowing it, and who will have difficulty in persuading themselves that when they call their servant John to bring their slippers, they have spoken nothing less than—prose.

We must hold firmly to our identification, because among the principal reasons which have prevented Æsthetic, the science of art, from revealing the true nature of art, its real roots in human nature, has been its separation from the general spiritual life, the having made of it a sort of special function or aristocratic circle. No one is astonished when he learns from physiology that every cellule is an organism and every organism a cellule or synthesis of cellules. No one is astonished at finding in a lofty mountain the same chemical elements that compose a small stone or fragment. There is not one physiology of small animals and one of large animals; nor is

there a special chemical theory of stones as distinct from mountains. In the same way, there is not a science of lesser intuition distinct from a science of greater intuition, nor one of ordinary intuition distinct from artistic intuition. There is but one Æsthetic, the science of intuitive or expressive knowledge, which is the æsthetic or artistic fact. And this Æsthetic is the true analogy of Logic. Logic includes, as facts of the same nature, the formation of the smallest and most ordinary concept and the most complicated scientific and philosophical system.

Artistic genius.

Nor can we admit that the word *genius* or artistic genius, as distinct from the non-genius of the ordinary man, possesses more than a quantitative signification. Great artists are said to reveal us to ourselves. But how could this be possible, unless there be identity of nature between their imagination and ours, and unless the difference be only one of quantity? It were well to change *poeta nascitur* into *homo nascitur poeta*: some men are born great poets, some small. The cult and superstition of the genius has arisen from this quantitative difference having been taken as a difference of quality. It has been forgotten that genius is not something that has fallen from heaven, but humanity itself. The man of genius,

who poses or is represented as distant from humanity, finds his punishment in becoming or appearing somewhat ridiculous. Examples of this are the *genius* of the romantic period and the *superman* of our time.

But it is well to note here, that those who claim unconsciousness as the chief quality of an artistic genius, hurl him from an eminence far above humanity to a position far below it. Intuitive or artistic genius, like every form of human activity, is always conscious; otherwise it would be blind mechanism. The only thing that may be wanting to the artistic genius is the *reflective* consciousness, the superadded consciousness of the historian or critic, which is not essential to artistic genius.

Content and form in Æsthetic.

The relation between matter and form, or between *content and form*, as it is generally called, is one of the most disputed questions in Æsthetic. Does the æsthetic fact consist of content alone, or of form alone, or of both together? This question has taken on various meanings, which we shall mention, each in its place. But when these words are taken as signifying what we have above defined, and matter is understood as emotivity not æsthetically elaborated, that is to say, impressions, and form

elaboration, intellectual activity and expression, then our meaning cannot be doubtful. We must, therefore, reject the thesis that makes the æsthetic fact to consist of the content alone (that is, of the simple impressions), in like manner with that other thesis, which makes it to consist of a junction between form and content, that is, of impressions plus expressions. In the æsthetic fact, the æsthetic activity is not added to the fact of the impressions, but these latter are formed and elaborated by it. The impressions reappear as it were in expression, like water put into a filter, which reappears the same and yet different on the other side. The æsthetic fact, therefore, is form, and nothing but form.

From this it results, not that the content is something superfluous (it is, on the contrary, the necessary point of departure for the expressive fact); but that *there is no passage* between the quality of the content and that of the form. It has sometimes been thought that the content, in order to be æsthetic, that is to say, transformable into form, should possess some determinate or determinable quality. But were that so, then form and content, expression and impression, would be the same thing. It is true

that the content is that which is convertible into form, but it has no determinable qualities until this transformation takes place. We know nothing of its nature. It does not become æsthetic content at once, but only when it has been effectively transformed. Æsthetic content has also been defined as what is *interesting*. That is not an untrue statement; it is merely void of meaning. What, then, is interesting? Expressive activity? Certainly the expressive activity would not have raised the content to the dignity of form, had it not been interested. The fact of its having been interested is precisely the fact of its raising the content to the dignity of form. But the word "interesting" has also been employed in another not illegitimate sense, which we shall explain further on.

Critique of the imitation of nature and of the artistic illusion.

The proposition that art is *imitation of nature* has also several meanings. Now truth has been maintained or at least shadowed with these words, now error. More frequently, nothing definite has been thought. One of the legitimate scientific meanings occurs when imitation is understood as representation or intuition of nature, a form of knowledge. And when this meaning has been understood, by placing in greater relief the spiritual character of the process, the other

proposition becomes also legitimate: namely, that art is the *idealization* or *idealizing* imitation of nature. But if by imitation of nature be understood that art gives mechanical reproductions, more or less perfect duplicates of natural objects, before which the same tumult of impressions caused by natural objects begins over again, then the proposition is evidently false. The painted wax figures that seem to be alive, and before which we stand astonished in the museums where such things are shown, do not give æsthetic intuitions. Illusion and hallucination have nothing to do with the calm domain of artistic intuition. If an artist paint the interior of a wax-work museum, or if an actor give a burlesque portrait of a man-statue on the stage, we again have spiritual labour and artistic intuition. Finally, if photography have anything in it of artistic, it will be to the extent that it transmits the intuition of the photographer, his point of view, the pose and the grouping which he has striven to attain. And if it be not altogether art, that is precisely because the element of nature in it remains more or less insubordinate and ineradicable. Do we ever, indeed, feel complete satisfaction before even the best of photographs? Would not an artist

vary and touch up much or little, remove or add something to any of them?

Critique of art conceived as a sentimental not a theoretical fact. Æsthetic appearance and feeling.

The statements repeated so often, with others similar, that art is not knowledge, that it does not tell the truth, that it does not belong to the world of theory, but to the world of feeling, arise from the failure to realize exactly the theoretic character of the simple intuition. This simple intuition is quite distinct from intellectual knowledge, as it is distinct from the perception of the real. The belief that only the intellective is knowledge, or at the most also the perception of the real, also arises from the failure to grasp the theoretic character of the simple intuition. We have seen that intuition is knowledge, free of concepts and more simple than the so-called perception of the real. Since art is knowledge and form, it does not belong to the world of feeling and of psychic material. The reason why so many æstheticians have so often insisted that art is *appearance* (*Schein*), is precisely because they have felt the necessity of distinguishing it from the more complex fact of perception by maintaining its pure intuitivity. For the same reason it has been claimed that art is *sentiment*. In fact, if the concept as content of art, and historical reality as such, be excluded,

there remains no other content than reality apprehended in all its ingenuousness and immediateness in the vital effort, in *sentiment*, that is to say, pure intuition.

Critique of the theory of æsthetic senses.

The theory of the *æsthetic senses* has also arisen from the failure to establish, or from having lost to view the character of the expression as distinct from the impression, of the form as distinct from the matter.

As has just been pointed out, this reduces itself to the error of wishing to seek a passage from the quality of the content to that of the form. To ask, in fact, what the æsthetic senses may be, implies asking what sensible impressions may be able to enter into æsthetic expressions, and what must of necessity do so. To this we must at once reply, that all impressions can enter into æsthetic expressions or formations, but that none are bound to do so. Dante raised to the dignity of form not only the "sweet colour of the oriental sapphire" (visual impression), but also tactile or thermic impressions, such as the "thick air" and the "fresh rivulets" which "parch all the more" the throat of the thirsty. The belief that a picture yields only visual impressions is a curious illusion. The bloom of a cheek, the warmth of a youthful

body, the sweetness and freshness of a fruit, the cutting of a sharpened blade, are not these, also, impressions that we have from a picture? Maybe they are visual? What would a picture be for a hypothetical man, deprived of all or many of his senses, who should in an instant acquire the sole organ of sight? The picture we are standing opposite and believe we see only with our eyes, would appear to his eyes as little more than the paint-smeared palette of a painter.

Some who hold firmly to the æsthetic character of given groups of impressions (for example, the visual, the auditive), and exclude others, admit, however, that if visual and auditive impressions enter *directly* into the æsthetic fact, those of the other senses also enter into it, but only as *associated*. But this distinction is altogether arbitrary. Æsthetic expression is a synthesis, in which it is impossible to distinguish direct and indirect. All impressions are by it placed on a level, in so far as they are æstheticised. He who takes into himself the image of a picture or of a poem does not experience, as it were, a series of impressions as to this image, some of which have a prerogative or precedence over others. And nothing is known of what happens prior to having received it, for

the distinctions made after reflexion have nothing to do with art.

The theory of the æsthetic senses has also been presented in another way; that is to say, as the attempt to establish what physiological organs are necessary for the æsthetic fact. The physiological organ or apparatus is nothing but a complex of cellules, thus and thus constituted, thus and thus disposed; that is to say, it is merely physical and natural fact or concept. But expression does not recognize physiological facts. Expression has its point of departure in the impressions, and the physiological path by which these have found their way to the mind is to it altogether indifferent. One way or another amounts to the same thing: it suffices that they are impressions.

It is true that the want of given organs, that is, of given complexes of cells, produces an absence of given impressions (when these are not obtained by another path by a kind of organic compensation). The man born blind cannot express or have the intuition of light. But the impressions are not conditioned solely by the organ, but also by the stimuli which operate upon the organ. Thus, he who has never had the impression of the sea will never be able to express

it, in the same way as he who has never had the impression of the great world or of the political conflict will never express the one or the other. This, however, does not establish a dependence of the expressive function on the stimulus or on the organ. It is the repetition of what we know already: expression presupposes impression. Therefore, given expressions imply given impressions. Besides, every impression excludes other impressions during the moment in which it dominates; and so does every expression.

Unity and indivisibility of the work of art.

Another corollary of the conception of expression as activity is the *indivisibility* of the work of art. Every expression is a unique expression. Activity is a fusion of the impressions in an organic whole. A desire to express this has always prompted the affirmation that the work of art should have *unity*, or, what amounts to the same thing, *unity in variety*. Expression is a synthesis of the various, the multiple, in the one.

The fact that we divide a work of art into parts, as a poem into scenes, episodes, similes, sentences, or a picture into single figures and objects, background, foreground, etc., may seem to be an objection to this affirmation. But such division annihilates the work, as dividing the organism into heart, brain, nerves, muscles and

so on, turns the living being into a corpse. It is true that there exist organisms in which the division gives place to more living things, but in such a case, and if we transfer the analogy to the æsthetic fact, we must conclude for a multiplicity of germs of life, that is to say, for a speedy re-elaboration of the single parts into new single expressions.

It will be observed that expression is sometimes based on other expressions. There are simple and there are *compound* expressions. One must admit some difference between the *eureka*, with which Archimedes expressed all his joy after his discovery, and the expressive act (indeed all the five acts) of a regular tragedy. Not in the least: expression is always directly based on impressions. He who conceives a tragedy puts into a crucible a great quantity, so to say, of impressions: the expressions themselves, conceived on other occasions, are fused together with the new in a single mass, in the same way as we can cast into a smelting furnace formless pieces of bronze and most precious statuettes. Those most precious statuettes must be melted in the same way as the formless bits of bronze, before there can be a new statue. The old expressions must descend again to the level of

impressions, in order to be synthetized in a new single expression.

By elaborating his impressions, man *frees* himself from them. By objectifying them, he removes them from him and makes himself their superior. The liberating and purifying function of art is another aspect and another formula of its character of activity. Activity is the deliverer, just because it drives away passivity. *Art as the deliverer.*

This also explains why it is customary to attribute to artists alike the maximum of sensibility or *passion*, and the maximum insensibility or Olympic *serenity*. Both qualifications agree, for they do not refer to the same object. The sensibility or passion relates to the rich material which the artist absorbs into his psychic organism; the insensibility or serenity to the form with which he subjugates and dominates the tumult of the feelings and of the passions.

III

ART AND PHILOSOPHY

Indissolubility of intellective from intuitive knowledge.

THE two forms of knowledge, æsthetic and intellectual or conceptual, are indeed diverse, but this does not amount altogether to separation and disjunction, as we find with two forces going each its own way. If we have shown that the æsthetic form is altogether independent of the intellectual and suffices to itself without external support, we have not said that the intellectual can stand without the æsthetic. This *reciprocity* would not be true.

What is knowledge by concepts? It is knowledge of relations of things, and those things are intuitions. Concepts are not possible without intuitions, just as intuition is itself impossible without the material of impressions. Intuitions are: this river, this lake, this brook, this rain, this glass of water; the concept is: water, not this or that appearance and particular example of water, but water in general, in whatever time

or place it be realized; the material of infinite intuitions, but of one single and constant concept.

However, the concept, the universal, if it be no longer intuition in one respect, is in another respect intuition, and cannot fail of being intuition. For the man who thinks has impressions and emotions, in so far as he thinks. His impression and emotion will not be love or hate, but *the effort of his thought itself*, with the pain and the joy, the love and the hate joined to it. This effort cannot but become intuitive in form, in becoming objective to the mind. To speak, is not to think logically; but to *think logically* is, at the same time, to *speak*.

Critique of the negations of this thesis.

That thought cannot exist without speech, is a truth generally admitted. The negations of this thesis are all founded on equivoques and errors.

The first of the equivoques is implied by those who observe that one can likewise think with geometrical figures, algebraical numbers, ideographic signs, without a single word, even pronounced silently and almost insensibly within one. They also affirm that there are languages in which the word, the phonetic sign, expresses nothing, unless the written sign also be looked at. But when we said "speech," we intended to

employ a synecdoche, and that "expression" generically, should be understood, for expression is not only so-called verbal expression, as we have already noted. It may be admitted that certain concepts may be thought without phonetic manifestations. But the very examples adduced to show this also prove that those concepts never exist without expressions.

Others maintain that animals, or certain animals, think or reason without speaking. Now as to how, whether, and what animals think, whether they be rudimentary, half-savage men resisting civilization, rather than physiological machines, as the old spiritualists would have it, are questions that do not concern us here. When the philosopher talks of animal, brutal, impulsive, instinctive nature and the like, he does not base himself on conjectures as to these facts concerning dogs or cats, lions or ants; but upon observations of what is called animal and brutal in man: of the boundary or animal basis of what we feel in ourselves. If individual animals, dogs or cats, lions or ants, possess something of the activity of man, so much the better, or so much the worse for them. This means that as regards them also we must talk, not of their nature as a whole, but of its animal

basis, as being perhaps larger and more strong than the animal basis of man. And if we suppose that animals think, and form concepts, what is there in the line of conjecture to justify the admission that they do so without corresponding expressions? The analogy with man, the knowledge of the spirit, human psychology, which is the instrument of all our conjectures as to animal psychology, would oblige us to suppose that if they think in any way, they also have some sort of speech.

It is from human psychology, that is, literary psychology, that comes the other objection, to the effect that the concept can exist without the word, because it is true that we all know books that are *well thought and badly written*: that is to say, a thought which remains thought *beyond* the expression, *notwithstanding* the imperfect expression. But when we talk of books well thought and badly written, we cannot mean other than that in those books are parts, pages, periods or propositions well thought out and well written, and other parts (perhaps the least important) ill thought out and badly written, not truly thought out and therefore not truly expressed. Where Vico's *Scienza nuova* is really ill written, it is also ill thought out. If we pass from the considera-

tion of big books to a short proposition, the error or the imprecision of this statement will be recognized at once. How could a proposition be clearly thought and confusedly written out?

All that can be admitted is that sometimes we possess thoughts (concepts) in an intuitive form, or in an abbreviated or, better, peculiar expression, sufficient for us, but not sufficient to communicate it with ease to another or other definite individuals. Hence people say inaccurately, that we have the thought without the expression; whereas it should properly be said that we have, indeed, the expression, but in a form that is not easy of social communication. This, however, is a very variable and altogether relative fact. There are always people who catch our thought on the wing, and prefer it in this abbreviated form, and would be displeased with the greater development of it, necessary for other people. In other words, the thought considered abstractly and logically will be the same; but æsthetically we are dealing with two different intuition-expressions, into both of which enter different psychological elements. The same argument suffices to destroy, that is, to interpret correctly, the altogether empirical distinction between an *internal* and an *external* language.

The most lofty manifestations, the summits of intellectual and of intuitive knowledge shining from afar, are called, as we know, Art and Science. Art and Science, then, are different and yet linked together; they meet on one side, which is the æsthetic side. Every scientific work is also a work of art. The æsthetic side may remain little noticed, when our mind is altogether taken up with the effort to understand the thought of the man of science, and to examine its truth. But it is no longer concealed, when we pass from the activity of understanding to that of contemplation, and behold that thought either developed before us, limpid, exact, well-shaped, without superfluous words, without lack of words, with appropriate rhythm and intonation; or confused, broken, embarrassed, tentative. Great thinkers are sometimes termed great writers, while other equally great thinkers remain more or less fragmentary writers, if indeed their fragments are scientifically to be compared with harmonious, coherent, and perfect works. *Art and science.*

We pardon thinkers and men of science their literary mediocrity. The fragments console us for the failure of the whole, for it is far more easy to recover the well-arranged composition from the fragmentary work of genius than to

achieve the discovery of genius. But how can we pardon mediocre expression in pure artists? *Mediocribus esse poetis non di, non homines, non concessere columnae.* The poet or painter who lacks form, lacks everything, because he lacks *himself.* Poetical material permeates the Soul of all: the expression alone, that is to say, the form, makes the poet. And here appears the truth of the thesis which denies to art all content, as content being understood just the intellectual concept. In this sense, when we take "content" as equal to "concept" it is most true, not only that art does not consist of content, but also that *it has no content.*

Content and form: another meaning. Prose and poetry.

In the same way the distinction between *poetry and prose* cannot be justified, save in that of art and science. It was seen in antiquity that such distinction could not be founded on external elements, such as rhythm and metre, or on the freedom or the limitation of the form; that it was, on the contrary, altogether internal. Poetry is the language of sentiment; prose of the intellect; but since the intellect is also sentiment, in its concretion and reality, so all prose has a poetical side.

The relation of first and second degree.

The relation between intuitive knowledge or expression, and intellectual knowledge or concept, between art and science, poetry and

prose, cannot be otherwise defined than by saying that it is one of *double degree.* The first degree is the expression, the second the concept: the first can exist without the second, but the second cannot exist without the first. There exists poetry without prose, but not prose without poetry. Expression, indeed, is the first affirmation of human activity. Poetry is "the maternal language of the human race"; the first men "were by nature sublime poets." We also admit this in another way, when we observe that the passage from soul to mind, from animal to human activity, is effected by means of language. And this should be said of intuition or expression in general. But to us it appears somewhat inaccurate to define language or expression as an *intermediate* link between nature and humanity, as though it were a mixture of the one and of the other. Where humanity appears, the rest has already disappeared; the man who expresses himself, certainly emerges from the state of nature, but he really does emerge: he does not stand half within and half without, as the use of the phrase "intermediate link" would imply.

Inexistence of other forms of knowledge.

The cognitive intellect has no form other than these two. Expression and concept exhaust it completely. The whole speculative life of man

is spent in passing from one to the other and back again.

History. Its identity with and difference from art.

Historicity is incorrectly held to be a third theoretical form. History is not form, but content: as form, it is nothing but intuition or æsthetic fact. History does not seek for laws nor form concepts; it employs neither induction nor deduction; it is directed *ad narrandum, non ad demonstrandum*; it does not construct universals and abstractions, but posits intuitions. The this, the that, the *individuum omni modo determinatum*, is its kingdom, as it is the kingdom of art. History, therefore, is included under the universal concept of art.

Faced with this proposition and with the impossibility of conceiving a third mode of knowledge, objections have been brought forward which would lead to the affiliation of history to intellective or scientific knowledge. The greater portion of these objections is dominated by the prejudice that in refusing to history the character of conceptual science, something of its value and dignity has been taken from it. This really arises from a false idea of art, conceived, not as an essential theoretic function, but as an amusement, a superfluity, a frivolity. Without reopening a long debate, which so far as we are concerned, is

finally closed, we will mention here one sophism which has been and still is widely repeated. It is intended to show the logical and scientific nature of history. The sophism consists in admitting that historical knowledge has for its object the individual; but not the representation, it is added, so much as the concept of the individual. From this it is argued that history is also a logical or scientific form of knowledge. History, in fact, should elaborate the concept of a personage such as Charlemagne or Napoleon; of an epoch, like the Renaissance or the Reformation; of an event, such as the French Revolution and the Unification of Italy. This it is held to do in the same way as Geometry elaborates the concepts of spatial form, or Æsthetic those of expression. But all this is untrue. History cannot do otherwise than represent Napoleon and Charlemagne, the Renaissance and the Reformation, the French Revolution and the Unification of Italy as individual facts with their individual physiognomy: that is, in the same way as logicians state, that one cannot have a concept of an individual, but only a representation. The so-called concept of the individual is always a universal or general concept, full of details, very rich, if you will, but however rich it be, yet incapable of attaining to

that individuality, to which historical knowledge, as æsthetic knowledge, alone attains.

Let us rather show how the content of history comes to be distinguished from that of art. The distinction is secondary. Its origin will be found in what has already been observed as to the ideal character of the intuition or first perception, in which all is real and therefore nothing is real. The mind forms the concepts of external and internal at a later stage, as it does those of what has happened and of what is desired, of object and subject, and the like. Thus it distinguishes historical from non-historical intuition, the *real* from the *unreal*, real fancy from pure fancy. Even internal facts, what is desired and imagined, castles in the air, and countries of Cockagne, have their reality. The soul, too, has its history. His illusions form part of the biography of every individual. But the history of an individual soul is history, because in it is always active the distinction between the real and the unreal, even when the real is the illusions themselves. But these distinctive concepts do not appear in history as do scientific concepts, but rather like those that we have seen dissolved and melted in the æsthetic intuitions, although they stand out in history in an altogether new relief.

History does not construct the concepts of the real and unreal, but makes use of them. History, in fact, is not the theory of history. Mere conceptual analysis is of no use in realizing whether an event in our lives were real or imaginary. It is necessary to reproduce the intuitions in the mind in the most complete form, as they were at the moment of production, in order to recognize the content. Historicity is distinguished in the concrete from pure imagination only as one intuition is distinguished from another: in the memory.

Historical criticism.

Where this is not possible, owing to the delicate and fleeting shades between the real and unreal intuitions, which confuse the one with the other, we must either renounce, for the time at least, the knowledge of what really happened (and this we often do), or we must fall back upon conjecture, verisimilitude, probability. The principle of verisimilitude and of probability dominates in fact all historical criticism. Examination of the sources and of authority is directed toward establishing the most credible evidence. And what is the most credible evidence, save that of the best observers, that is, of those who best remember and (be it understood) have not desired to falsify, nor had interest in falsifying the truth of things? From this it follows

Historical scepticism.

that intellectual scepticism finds it easy to deny the certainty of any history, for the certainty of history is never that of science. Historical certainty is composed of memory and of authority, not of analyses and of demonstration. To speak of historical induction or demonstration, is to make a metaphorical use of these expressions, which bear quite a different meaning in history to that which they bear in science. The conviction of the historian is the undemonstrable conviction of the juryman, who has heard the witnesses, listened attentively to the case, and prayed Heaven to inspire him. Sometimes, without doubt, he is mistaken, but the mistakes are in a negligible minority compared with the occasions when he gets hold of the truth. That is why good sense is right against the intellectualists, in believing in history, which is not a "fable agreed upon," but that which the individual and humanity remember of their past. We strive to enlarge and to render as precise as possible this record, which in some places is dim, in others very clear. We cannot do without it, such as it is, and taken as a whole, it is rich in truth. In a spirit of paradox only, can one doubt if there ever were a Greece or a Rome, an Alexander or a Cæsar, a feudal Europe

overthrown by a series of revolutions, that on the 1st of November 1517 the theses of Luther were seen fixed to the door of the church of Wittenberg, or that the Bastile was taken by the people of Paris on the 14th of July 1789.

"What proof givest thou of all this?" asks the sophist, ironically. Humanity replies "I remember."

Philosophy as perfect science. The so-called natural sciences, and their limits.

The world of what has happened, of the concrete, of history, is the world that is called real, natural, including in this definition the reality that is called physical, as well as that which is called spiritual and human. All this world is intuition; historical intuition, if it be realistically shown as it is, or imaginary intuition, artistic in the strict sense, if shown under the aspect of the possible, that is to say, of the imaginable.

Science, true science, which is not intuition but concept, not individuality but universality, cannot be anything but a science of the spirit, that is, of what is universal in reality: Philosophy. If natural *sciences* be spoken of, apart from philosophy, it is necessary to observe that these are not perfect sciences: they are complexes of knowledge, arbitrarily abstracted and fixed. The so-called natural sciences themselves recognize,

in fact, that they are surrounded by limitations. These limitations are nothing more than historical and intuitive data. They calculate, measure, establish equalities, regularity, create classes and types, formulate laws, show in their own way how one fact arises out of other facts; but in their progress they are always met with facts which are known intuitively and historically. Even geometry now states that it rests altogether on hypotheses, since space is not three-dimensional or Euclidean, but this assumption is made use of by preference, because it is more convenient. What there is of truth in the natural sciences, is either philosophy or historical fact. What they contain proper to themselves is abstract and arbitrary. When the natural sciences wish to form themselves into perfect sciences, they must issue from their circle and enter the philosophical circle. This they do when they posit concepts which are anything but natural, such as those of the atom without extension in space, of ether or vibrating matter, of vital force, of space beyond the reach of intuition, and the like. These are true and proper philosophical efforts, when they are not mere words void of meaning. The concepts of natural science are, without doubt, most useful;

but one cannot obtain from them that *system*, which belongs only to the spirit.

These historical and intuitive assumptions, which cannot be separated from the natural sciences, furthermore explain, not only how, in the progress of knowledge, that which was once considered to be truth descends gradually to the grade of mythological beliefs and imaginary illusions, but also how, among natural scientists, there are some who term all that serves as basis of argument in their teaching *mythical facts*, *verbal expedients*, or *conventions*. The naturalists and mathematicians who approach the study of the energies of the spirit without preparation, are apt to carry thither these mental habits and to speak, in philosophy, of such and such conventions "as arranged by man." They make conventions of truth and morality, and their supreme convention is the Spirit itself! However, if there are to be conventions, something must exist about which there is no convention to be made, but which is itself the agent of the convention. This is the spiritual activity of man. The limitation of the natural sciences postulates the illimitation of philosophy.

The phenomenon and the noumenon.

These explications have firmly established that the pure or fundamental forms of knowledge are

two: the intuition and the concept—Art, and Science or Philosophy. With these are to be included History, which is, as it were, the product of intuition placed in contact with the concept, that is, of art receiving in itself philosophic distinctions, while remaining concrete and individual. All the other forms (natural sciences and mathematics) are impure, being mingled with extraneous elements of practical origin. The intuition gives the world, the phenomenon; the concept gives the noumenon, the Spirit.

IV

HISTORICISM AND INTELLECTUALISM IN ÆSTHETIC

THESE relations between intuitive or æsthetic knowledge and the other fundamental or derivative forms of knowledge having been definitely established, we are now in a position to reveal the errors of a series of theories which have been, or are, presented, as theories of Æsthetic.

Critique of verisimilitude and of naturalism.

From the confusion between the exigencies of art in general and the particular exigencies of history has arisen the theory (which has lost ground to-day, but used to dominate in the past) of *verisimilitude* as the object of art. As is generally the case with erroneous propositions, the intention of those who employed and employ the concept of verisimilitude has no doubt often been much more reasonable than the definition given of the word. By verisimilitude used to be meant the artistic *coherence* of the representation, that is to say, its completeness and effectiveness. If "verisimilar" be translated by "coherent," a most

exact meaning will often be found in the discussions, examples, and judgments of the critics. An improbable personage, an improbable ending to a comedy, are really badly-drawn personages, badly-arranged endings, happenings without artistic motive. It has been said with reason that even fairies and sprites must have verisimilitude, that is to say, be really sprites and fairies, coherent artistic intuitions. Sometimes the word "possible" has been used instead of "verisimilar." As we have already remarked in passing, this word possible is synonymous with that which is imaginable or may be known intuitively. Everything which is really, that is to say, coherently, imagined, is possible. But formerly, and especially by the theoreticians, by verisimilar was understood historical credibility, or that historical truth which is not demonstrable, but conjecturable, not true, but verisimilar. It has been sought to impose a like character upon art. Who does not recall the great part played in literary history by the criticism of the verisimilar? For example, the fault found with the *Jerusalem Delivered*, based upon the history of the Crusades, or of the Homeric poems, upon that of the verisimilitude of the costume of the emperors and kings?

At other times has been imposed upon art

the duty of the æsthetic reproduction of historical reality. This is another of the erroneous significations assumed by the theory concerning *the imitation of nature.* Verism and naturalism have since afforded the spectacle of a confusion of the æsthetic fact with the processes of the natural sciences, by aiming at some sort of *experimental* drama or romance.

Critique of ideas in art, of theses in art, and of the typical.

The confusions between the methods of art and those of the philosophical sciences have been far more frequent. Thus it has often been held to be within the competence of art to develop concepts, to unite the intelligible with the sensible, to represent *ideas or universals*, putting art in the place of science, that is, confusing the artistic function in general with the particular case in which it becomes æsthetico-logical.

The theory of art as supporting *theses* can be reduced to the same error, as can be the theory of art considered as individual representation, exemplifying scientific laws. The example, in so far as it is an example, stands for the thing exemplified, and is thus an exposition of the universal, that is to say, a form of science, more or less popular or vulgarized.

The same may be said of the æsthetic theory of the *typical*, when by type is understood, as it

frequently is, just the abstraction or the concept, and it is affirmed that art should make *the species shine in the individual.* If by typical be here understood the individual, here, too, we have a merely verbal variation. To typify would signify, in this case, to characterize; that is, to determine and to represent the individual. Don Quixote is a type; but of whom is he a type, if not of all Don Quixotes? A type, that is to say, of himself. Certainly he is not a type of abstract concepts, such as the loss of the sense of reality, or of the love of glory. An infinite number of personages can be thought of under these concepts, who are not Don Quixote. In other words, we find our own impressions fully determined and verified in the expression of a poet (for example in a poetical personage). We call that expression typical, which we might call simply æsthetic. Poetical or artistic universals have been spoken of in like manner, in order to show that the artistic product is altogether spiritual and ideal in itself.

Critique of the symbol and of the allegory.

Continuing to correct these errors, or to make clear equivoques, we will note that the *symbol* has sometimes been given as essence of art. Now, if the symbol be given as inseparable from the artistic intuition, it is the synonym of the

intuition itself, which always has an ideal character. There is no double-bottom to art, but one only; in art all is symbolical, because all is ideal. But if the symbol be looked upon as separable—if on the one side can be expressed the symbol, and on the other the thing symbolized, we fall back again into the intellectualist error: that pretended symbol is the exposition of an abstract concept, it is an *allegory*, it is science, or art that apes science. But we must be just toward the allegorical also. In some cases, it is altogether harmless. Given the *Gerusalemme liberata*, the allegory was imagined afterwards; given the *Adone* of Marino, the poet of the lascivious insinuated afterwards that it was written to show how "immoderate indulgence ends in pain"; given a statue of a beautiful woman, the sculptor can write on a card that the statue represents *Clemency* or *Goodness*. This allegory linked to a finished work *post festum* does not change the work of art. What is it, then? It is an expression externally *added* to another expression. A little page of prose is added to the *Gerusalemme*, expressing another thought of the poet; a verse or a strophe is added to the *Adone*, expressing what the poet would like to make a part of his public swallow;

while to the statue nothing more than the single word is added: *Clemency* or *Goodness.*

Critique of the theory of artistic and literary classes.

But the greatest triumph of the intellectualist error lies in the theory of artistic and literary classes, which still has vogue in literary treatises, and disturbs the critics and the historians of art. Let us observe its genesis.

The human mind can pass from the æsthetic to the logical, just because the former is a first step, in respect to the latter. It can destroy the expressions, that is, the thought of the individual with the thought of the universal. It can reduce expressive facts to logical relations. We have already shown that this operation in its turn becomes concrete in an expression, but this does not mean that the first expressions have not been destroyed. They have yielded their place to the new æsthetico-logical expressions. When we are on the second step, we have left the first.

He who enters a picture-gallery, or who reads a series of poems, may, after he has looked and read, go further: he may seek out the relations of the things there expressed. Thus those pictures and compositions, each of which is an individual inexpressible by logic, are resolved into universals and abstractions, such as *costumes*, *landscapes*, *portraits*, *domestic life*, *battles*, *animals*, *flowers*,

fruit, seascapes, lakes, deserts, tragic, comic, piteous, cruel, lyrical, epic, dramatic, knightly, idyllic facts, and the like. They are often also resolved into merely quantitative categories, such as *little picture, picture, statuette, group, madrigal, song, sonnet, garland of sonnets, poetry, poem, story, romance*, and the like.

When we think the concept *domestic life*, or *knighthood*, or *idyll*, or *cruelty*, or any other quantitative concept, the individual expressive fact from which we started is abandoned. From æsthetes that we were, we have been changed into logicians; from contemplators of expression, into reasoners. Certainly no objection can be made to such a process. In what other way could science be born, which, if æsthetic expressions be assumed in it, yet has for function to go beyond them? The logical or scientific form, as such, excludes the æsthetic form. He who begins to think scientifically has already ceased to contemplate æsthetically; although his thought will assume of necessity in its turn an æsthetic form, as has already been said, and as it would be superfluous to repeat.

The error begins when we try to deduce the expression from the concept, and to find in the thing substituting the laws of the thing substi-

tuted; when the difference between the second and the first step has not been observed, and when, in consequence, we declare that we are standing on the first step, when we are really standing on the second. This error is known as *the theory of artistic and literary classes.*

What is the æsthetic form of domestic life, of knighthood, of the idyll, of cruelty, and so forth? How should these contents be *represented*? Such is the absurd problem implied in the theory of artistic and literary classes. It is in this that consists all search after laws or rules of styles. Domestic life, knighthood, idyll, cruelty, and the like, are not impressions, but concepts. They are not contents, but logico-æsthetic forms. You cannot express the form, for it is already itself expression. And what are the words cruelty, idyll, knighthood, domestic life, and so on, but the expression of those concepts?

Even the most refined of these distinctions, those that have the most philosophic appearance, do not resist criticism; as, for instance, when works of art are divided into the subjective and the objective styles, into lyric and epic, into works of feeling and works of design. It is impossible to separate in æsthetic analysis, the subjective

from the objective side, the lyric from the epic, the image of feeling from that of things.

Errors derived from this theory appearing in judgments on art.

From the theory of the artistic and literary classes derive those erroneous modes of judgment and of criticism, thanks to which, instead of asking before a work of art if it be expressive, and what it expresses, whether it speak or stammer, or be silent altogether, it is asked if it be obedient to the *laws* of the epic poem, or to those of tragedy, to those of historical portraiture, or to those of landscape painting. Artists, however, while making a verbal pretence of agreeing, or yielding a feigned obedience to them, have really always disregarded these *laws of styles.* Every true work of art has violated some established class and upset the ideas of the critics, who have thus been obliged to enlarge the number of classes, until finally even this enlargement has proved too narrow, owing to the appearance of new works of art, which are naturally followed by new scandals, new upsettings, and—new enlargements.

From the same theory come the prejudices, owing to which at one time (and is it really passed?) people used to lament that Italy had no tragedy (until a poet arose who gave to Italy that wreath which was the only thing wanting to her glorious

hair), nor France the epic poem (until the *Henriade*, which slaked the thirsty throats of the critics). Eulogies accorded to the inventors of new styles are connected with these prejudices, so much so, that in the seventeenth century the invention of the *mock-heroic* poem seemed an important event, and the honour of it was disputed, as though it were the discovery of America. But the works adorned with this name (the *Secchia rapita* and the *Scherno degli Dei*) were still-born, because their authors (a slight drawback) had nothing new or original to say. Mediocrities racked their brains to invent, artificially, new styles. The *piscatorial* eclogue was added to the *pastoral*, and then, finally, the *military* eclogue. The *Aminta* was bathed and became the *Alceo*. Finally, there have been historians of art and literature, so much fascinated with these ideas of classes, that they claimed to write the history, not of single and effective literary and artistic works, but of their classes, those empty phantoms. They have claimed to portray, not the evolution of the *artistic spirit*, but the *evolution of classes*.

The philosophical condemnation of artistic and literary classes is found in the formulation and demonstration of what artistic activity has ever

sought and good taste ever recognized. What is to be done if good taste and the real fact, put into formulas, sometimes assume the air of paradoxes?

Empirical sense of the divisions of classes.

Now if we talk of tragedies, comedies, dramas, romances, pictures of everyday life, battle-pieces, landscapes, seascapes, poems, versicles, lyrics, and the like, if it be only with a view to be understood, and to draw attention in general and approximatively to certain groups of works, to which, for one reason or another, it is desired to draw attention, in that case, no scientific error has been committed. We employ *vocables and phrases*; we do not establish *laws and definitions*. The mistake arises when the weight of a scientific definition is given to a word, when we ingenuously let ourselves be caught in the meshes of that phraseology. Pray permit me a comparison. It is necessary to arrange the books in a library in one way or another. This used generally to be done by means of a rough classification by subjects (among which the categories of miscellaneous and eccentric were not wanting); they are now generally arranged by sizes or by publishers. Who can deny the necessity and the utility of these groupings? But what should we say if some one began seriously to seek out

the literary laws of miscellanies and of eccentricities from the Aldine or Bodonian collection, from size A or size B, that is to say, from these altogether arbitrary groupings whose sole object has been their practical use? Well, whoever should undertake an enterprise such as this, would be doing neither more nor less than those who seek out the æsthetic laws of literary and artistic classes.

V

ANALOGOUS ERRORS IN HISTORIC AND LOGIC

THE better to confirm these criticisms, it will be opportune to cast a rapid glance over analogous and opposite errors, born of ignorance as to the true nature of art, and of its relation to history and to science. These errors have injured alike the theory of history and of science, of Historic (or Historiology) and of Logic.

Critique of the philosophy of history.

Historical intellectualism has been the cause of the many researches which have been made, especially during the last two centuries, researches which continue to-day, for *a philosophy of history*, for an *ideal history*, for a *sociology*, for a *historical psychology*, or however may be otherwise entitled or described a science whose object is to extract from history, universal laws and concepts. Of what kind must be these laws, these universals? Historical laws and historical concepts? In that case, an elementary criticism of knowledge suffices to make clear the absurdity

of the attempt. When such expressions as a *historical law*, a *historical concept* are not simply metaphors colloquially employed, they are true contradictions in terms: the adjective is as unsuitable to the substantive as in the expressions *qualitative quantity* or *pluralistic monism.* History means concretion and individuality, law and concept mean abstraction and universality. If, on the other hand, the attempt to draw from history historical laws and concepts be abandoned, and it be merely desired to draw from it laws and concepts, the attempt is certainly not frivolous; but the science thus obtained will be, not a philosophy of history, but rather, according to the case, either philosophy in its various specifications of Ethic, Logic, etc., or empirical science in its infinite divisions and subdivisions. Thus are sought out either those philosophical concepts which are, as has already been observed, at the bottom of every historical construction and separate perception from intuition, historical intuition from pure intuition, history from art; or already formed historical intuitions are collected and reduced to types and classes, which is exactly the method of the natural sciences. Great thinkers have sometimes donned the unsuitable cloak of the philosophy of history, and notwithstanding

the covering, they have conquered philosophical truths of the greatest magnitude. The cloak has been dropped, the truth has remained. Modern sociologists are rather to be blamed, not so much for the illusion in which they are involved when they talk of an impossible science of sociology, as for the infecundity which almost always accompanies their illusion. It is but a small evil that Æsthetic should be termed sociological Æsthetic, or Logic, social Logic. The grave evil is that their Æsthetic is an old-fashioned expression of sensualism, their Logic verbal and incoherent. The philosophical movement, to which we have referred, has borne two good fruits in relation to history. First of all has been felt the desire to construct a theory of historiography, that is, to understand the nature and the limits of history, a theory which, in conformity with the analyses made above, cannot obtain satisfaction, save in a general science of intuition, in an Æsthetic, from which Historic would be separated under a special head by means of the intervention of the universals. Furthermore, concrete truths relating to historical events have often been expressed beneath the false and presumptuous cloak of a philosophy of history; canons and empirical advice have been formulated

by no means superfluous to students and critics. It does not seem possible to deny this utility to the most recent of philosophies of history, to so-called historical materialism, which has thrown a very vivid light upon many sides of social life, formerly neglected or ill understood.

Æsthetic invasions into Logic.

The principle of authority, of the *ipse dixit*, is an invasion of historicity into the domains of science and philosophy which has raged in the schools. This substitutes for introspection and philosophical analyses, this or that evidence, document, or authoritative statement, with which history certainly cannot dispense. But Logic, the science of thought and of intellectual knowledge, has suffered the most grave and destructive disturbances and errors of all, through the imperfect understanding of the æsthetic fact. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, if logical activity come after and contain in itself æsthetic activity? An inexact Æsthetic must of necessity drag after it an inexact Logic.

Whoever opens logical treatises, from the *Organum* of Aristotle to the moderns, must admit that they all contain a haphazard mixture of verbal facts and facts of thought, of grammatical forms and of conceptual forms, of Æsthetic and of Logic. Not that attempts have

been wanting to escape from verbal expression and to seize thought in its effective nature. Aristotelian logic itself did not become mere syllogistic and verbalism, without some stumbling and oscillation. The especially logical problem was often touched upon in the Middle Ages, by the nominalists, realists, and conceptualists, in their disputes. With Galileo and with Bacon, the natural sciences gave an honourable place to induction. Vico combated formalist and mathematical logic in favour of inventive methods. Kant called attention to *a priori* syntheses. The absolute idealists despised the Aristotelian logic. The followers of Herbart, bound to Aristotle, on the other hand, set in relief those judgments which they called narrative, which are of a character altogether different from other logical judgments. Finally, the linguists insisted upon the irrationality of the word, in relation to the concept. But a conscious, sure, and radical movement of reform can find no base or starting-point, save in the science of Æsthetic.

Logic in its essence.

In a Logic suitably reformed on this basis, it will be fitting to proclaim before all things this truth, and to draw from it all its consequences: the logical fact, *the only logical fact*, is *the concept*, the universal, the spirit that forms, and in so far

as it forms, the universal. And if be understood by induction, as has sometimes been understood, the formation of universals, and by deduction the verbal development of these, then it is clear that true Logic can be nothing but inductive Logic. But since by the word "deduction" has been more frequently understood the special processes of mathematics, and by the word "induction" those of the natural sciences, it will be advisable to avoid the one and the other denomination, and to say that true Logic is the Logic of the concept. The Logic of the concept, adopting a method which is at once induction and deduction, will adopt neither the one nor the other exclusively, that is, will adopt the (speculative) method, which is intrinsic to it.

The concept, the universal, is in itself, abstractly considered, *inexpressible*. No word is proper to it. So true is this, that the logical concept remains always the same, notwithstanding the variation of verbal forms. In respect to the concept, expression is a simple *sign* or *indication*. There must be an expression, it cannot fail; but what it is to be, this or that, is determined by the historical and psychological conditions of the individual who is speaking. The quality of the expression is not deducible from the nature of the concept. There does not

exist a true (logical) sense of words. He who forms a concept bestows on each occasion their true meaning on the words.

Distinction between logical and non-logical judgments.

This being established, the only truly logical (that is, æsthetico-logical) propositions, the only rigorously logical judgments, can be nothing but those whose proper and exclusive content is the determination of a concept. These propositions or judgments are the *definitions*. Science itself is nothing but a complex of definitions, unified in a supreme definition; a system of concepts, or chief concept.

It is therefore necessary to exclude from Logic all those propositions which do not affirm universals. Narrative judgments, not less than those termed non-enunciative by Aristotle, such as the expression of desires, are not properly logical judgments. They are either purely æsthetic propositions or historical propositions. "Peter is passing; it is raining to-day; I am sleepy; I want to read": these and an infinity of propositions of the same kind, are nothing but either a mere enclosing in words the impression of the fact that Peter is passing, of the falling rain, of my organism inclining to sleep, and of my will directed to reading, or they are existential affirmation concerning those facts. They

are expressions of the real or of the unreal, of historical or of pure imagination; they are certainly not definitions of universals.

Syllogistic. This exclusion cannot meet with great difficulties. It is already almost an accomplished fact, and the only thing required is to render it explicit, decisive, and coherent. But what is to be done with all that part of human experience which is called *syllogistic*, consisting of judgments and reasonings which are based on concepts. What is syllogistic? Is it to be looked down upon from above with contempt, as something useless, as has so often been done in the reaction of the humanists against scholasticism, in absolute idealism, in the enthusiastic admiration of our times for the methods of observation and experiment of the natural sciences? Syllogistic, reasoning *in forma*, is not a discovery of truth; it is the art of exposing, debating, disputing with oneself and others. Proceeding from concepts already formed, from facts already observed and making appeal to the persistence of the true or of thought (such is the meaning of the principle of identity and contradiction), it infers consequences from these data, that is, it represents what has already been discovered. Therefore, if it be an *idem per idem* from the point of view

of invention, it is most efficacious as a teaching and an exposition. To reduce affirmations to the syllogistic scheme is a way of controlling one's own thought and of criticizing that of others. It is easy to laugh at syllogisers, but, if syllogistic has been born and retains its place, it must have good roots of its own. Satire applied to it can concern only its abuses, such as the attempt to prove syllogistically questions of fact, observation, and intuition, or the neglect of profound meditation and unprejudiced investigation of problems, for syllogistic formality. And if so-called *mathematical Logic* can sometimes aid us in our attempt to remember with ease, to manipulate the results of our own thought, let us welcome this form of the syllogism also, long prophesied by Leibnitz and essayed by many, even in our days.

But precisely because syllogistic is the art of exposing and of debating, its theory cannot hold the first place in a philosophical Logic, usurping that belonging to the doctrine of the concept, which is the central and dominating doctrine, to which is reduced everything logical in syllogistic, without leaving a residuum (relations of concepts, subordination, co-ordination, identification, and so on). Nor must it ever be forgotten that the concept, the (logical) judgment,

and the syllogism do not occupy the same position. The first alone is the logical fact, the second and third are the forms in which the first manifests itself. These, in so far as they are forms, cannot be examined save æsthetically (grammatically); in so far as they possess logical content, only by neglecting the forms themselves and passing to the doctrine of the concept.

False Logic and true Æsthetic.

This shows the truth of the ordinary remark to the effect that he who reasons ill, also speaks and writes ill, that exact logical analysis is the basis of good expression. This truth is a tautology, for to reason well is in fact to express oneself well, because the expression is the intuitive possession of one's own logical thought. The principle of contradiction, itself, is at bottom nothing but the æsthetic principle of coherence. It will be said that starting from erroneous concepts it is possible to write and to speak exceedingly well, as it is also possible to reason well; that some who are dull at research may yet be most limpid writers. That is precisely because to write well depends upon having a clear intuition of one's own thought, even if it be erroneous; that is to say, not of its scientific, but of its æsthetic truth, since it is this truth itself. A philosopher like Schopenhauer can

imagine that art is a representation of the Platonic ideas. This doctrine is absolutely false scientifically, yet he may develop this false knowledge in excellent prose, æsthetically most true. But we have already replied to these objections, when we observed that at that precise point where a speaker or a writer enunciates an ill-thought concept, he is at the same time speaking ill and writing ill. He may, however, afterwards recover himself in the many other parts of his thought, which consist of true propositions, not connected with the preceding errors, and lucid expressions may with him follow upon turbid expressions.

Logic reformed.

All enquiries as to the forms of judgments and of syllogisms, on their conversion and on their various relations, which still encumber treatises on Logic, are therefore destined to become less, to be transformed, to be reduced to something else.

The doctrine of the concept and of the organism of the concepts, of definition, of system, of philosophy, and of the various sciences, and the like, will fill the place of these and will constitute the only true and proper Logic.

Those who first had some suspicion of the intimate connexion between Æsthetic and Logic and conceived Æsthetic as a *Logic of sensible knowledge*, were strangely addicted to applying

logical categories to the new knowledge, talking of *æsthetic concepts*, *æsthetic judgments*, *æsthetic syllogisms*, and so on. We are less superstitious as regards the solidity of the traditional Logic of the schools, and better informed as to the nature of Æsthetic. We do not recommend the application of Logic to Æsthetic, but the liberation of Logic from æsthetic forms. These have given rise to non-existent forms or categories of Logic, due to the following of altogether arbitrary and crude distinctions.

Logic thus reformed will always be *formal* Logic; it will study the true form or activity of thought, the concept, excluding single and particular concepts. The old Logic is ill called formal; it were better to call it *verbal* or *formalistic*. Formal Logic will drive out formalistic Logic. To attain this object, it will not be necessary to have recourse, as some have done, to a real or material Logic, which is not a science of thought, but thought itself in the act; not only a Logic, but the complex of Philosophy, in which Logic also is included. The science of thought (Logic) is that of the concept, as that of fancy (Æsthetic) is the science of expression. The well-being of both sciences lies in exactly following in every particular the distinction between the two domains.

VI

THEORETIC AND PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

THE intuitive and intellective forms exhaust, as we have said, all the theoretic form of the spirit. But it is not possible to know them thoroughly, nor to criticize another series of erroneous æsthetic theories, without first establishing clearly their relations with another form of the spirit, which is the *practical* form.

The will.

This form or practical activity is the *will.* We do not employ this word here in the sense of any philosophical system, in which the will is the foundation of the universe, the principle of things and the true reality. Nor do we employ it in the ample sense of other systems, which understand by will the energy of the spirit, the spirit or activity in general, making of every act of the human spirit an act of will. Neither such metaphysical nor such metaphorical meaning is ours. For us, the will is, as generally accepted, that activity of the spirit, which differs from the mere

theoretical contemplation of things, and is productive, not of knowledge, but of actions. Action is really action, in so far as it is voluntary. It is not necessary to remark that in the will to do, is included, in the scientific sense, also what is vulgarly called not-doing: the will to resist, to reject, the prometheutic will, is also action.

The will as an ulterior stage in respect to knowledge.

Man understands things with the theoretical form, with the practical form he changes them; with the one he appropriates the universe, with the other he creates it. But the first form is the basis of the second; and the relation of *double degree*, which we have already found existing between æsthetic and logical activity, is repeated between these two on a larger scale. Knowledge independent of the will is thinkable; will independent of knowledge is unthinkable. Blind will is not will; true will has eyes.

How can we will, without having before us historical intuitions (perceptions) of objects, and knowledge of (logical) relations, which enlighten us as to the nature of those objects? How can we really will, if we do not know the world which surrounds us, and the manner of changing things by acting upon them?

Objections and elucidations.

It has been objected that men of action, practical men in the eminent sense, are the

least disposed to contemplate and to theorize: their energy is not delayed in contemplation, it rushes at once into will. And conversely, that contemplative men, philosophers, are often very mediocre in practical matters, weak willed, and therefore neglected and thrust aside in the tumult of life. It is easy to see that these distinctions are merely empirical and quantitative. Certainly, the practical man has no need of a philosophical system in order to act, but in the spheres where he does act, he starts from intuitions and concepts which are most clear to him. Otherwise he could not will the most ordinary actions. It would not be possible to will to feed oneself, for instance, without knowledge of the food, and of the link of cause and effect between certain movements and certain organic sensations. Rising gradually to the more complex forms of action, for example to the political, how could we will anything politically good or bad, without knowing the real conditions of society, and consequently the means and expedients to be adopted? When the practical man feels himself in the dark about one or more of these points, or when he is seized with doubt, action either does not begin or stops. It is then that the theoretical moment, which in the rapid succession of human actions is hardly noticed and

rapidly forgotten, becomes important and occupies consciousness for a longer time. And if this moment be prolonged, then the practical man may become Hamlet, divided between desire for action and his small amount of theoretical clarity as regards the situation and the means to be employed. And if he develop a taste for contemplation and discovery, and leave willing and acting, to a more or less great extent, to others, there is formed in him the calm disposition of the artist, of the man of science, or of the philosopher, who are sometimes unpractical or altogether blameworthy. These observations are all obvious. Their exactitude cannot be denied. Let us, however, repeat that they are founded on quantitative distinctions and do not disprove, but confirm the fact that an action, however slight it be, cannot really be an action, that is, an action that is willed, unless it be preceded by cognoscitive activity.

Critique of practical judgments or judgments of value.

Some psychologists, on the other hand, place before practical action an altogether special class of judgments, which they call *practical* judgments or judgments *of value*. They say that in order to resolve to perform an action, it is necessary to have judged: "this action is useful, this action is good." And at first sight this

seems to have the testimony of consciousness on its side. But he who observes better and analyses with greater subtlety, discovers that such judgments follow instead of preceding the affirmation of the will; they are nothing but the expression of the already exercised volition. A good or useful action is an action that is willed. It will always be impossible to distil from the objective study of things a single drop of usefulness or goodness. We do not desire things because we know them to be good or useful; but we know them to be good and useful, because we desire them. Here too, the rapidity with which the facts of consciousness follow one another has given rise to an illusion. Practical action is preceded by knowledge, but not by practical knowledge, or better by the practical: to obtain this, it is first necessary to have practical action. The third moment, therefore, of practical judgments, or judgments of value, is altogether imaginary. It does not come between the two moments or degrees of theory and practice. That is why there exist no normative sciences in general, which regulate or command, discover and indicate values to the practical activity; because there is none for any other activity, assuming every science already realized

and that activity developed, which it afterwards takes as its object.

Exclusion of the practical from the æsthetic.

These distinctions established, we must condemn as erroneous every theory which confuses æsthetic with practical activity, or introduces the laws of the second into the first. That science is theory and art practice has been many times affirmed. Those who make this statement, and look upon the æsthetic fact as a practical fact, do not do so capriciously or because they are groping in the void; but because they have their eye on something which is really practical. But the practical which they are looking at is not Æsthetic, nor within Æsthetic; it is *outside and beside it*; and although they are often found united, they are not necessarily united, that is to say, by the bond of identity of nature.

The æsthetic fact is altogether completed in the expressive elaboration of the impressions. When we have conquered the word within us, conceived definitely and vividly a figure or a statue, or found a musical motive, expression is born and is complete; there is no need for anything else. If after this we should open our mouths and *will* to open them, to speak, or our throats to sing, and declare in a loud voice

and with extended throat what we have completely said or sung to ourselves; or if we should stretch out and *will* to stretch out our hands to touch the notes of the piano, or to take up the brushes and the chisel, making thus in detail those movements which we have already done rapidly, and doing so in such a way as to leave more or less durable traces; this is all an addition, a fact which obeys quite different laws to the first, and with these laws we have not to occupy ourselves for the moment. Let us, however, here recognize that this second movement is a production of things, a *practical* fact, or a fact of *will*. It is customary to distinguish the internal from the external work of art: the terminology seems here to be infelicitous, for the work of art (the æsthetic work) is always *internal*; and that which is called *external* is no longer a work of art. Others distinguish between *æsthetic* fact and *artistic* fact, meaning by the second the external or practical stage, which may and generally does follow the first. But in this case, it is simply a case of linguistic usage, doubtless permissible, although perhaps not opportune.

For the same reasons the search for the *end of art* is ridiculous, when it is understood

Critique of the theory of the end of art and of the choice of the content.

of art as art. And since to fix an end is to choose, the theory that the content of art must be *selected* is another form of the same error. A selection from among impressions and sensations implies that these are already expressions, otherwise, how can a selection be made among what is continuous and indistinct? To choose is to will: to will this and not to will that: and this and that must be before us, they must be expressed. Practice follows, it does not precede theory; expression is free inspiration.

The true artist, in fact, finds himself big with his theme, he knows not how; he feels the moment of birth drawing near, but he cannot will it or not will it. If he were to wish to act in opposition to his inspiration, to make an arbitrary choice, if, born Anacreon, he were to wish to sing of Atreus and of Alcides, his lyre would warn him of his mistake, echoing only of Venus and of Love, notwithstanding his efforts to the contrary.

Practical innocence of art.

The theme or content cannot, therefore, be practically or morally charged with epithets of praise or of blame. When critics of art remark that a theme is *badly selected*, in cases where that observation has a just foundation, it is a question of blaming, not the selection of the theme (which

would be absurd), but the manner in which the artist has treated it. The expression has failed, owing to the contradictions which it contains. And when the same critics rebel against the theme or the content as being unworthy of art and blameworthy, in respect to works which they proclaim to be artistically perfect; if these expressions really are perfect, there is nothing to be done but to advise the critics to leave the artists in peace, for they cannot get inspiration, save from what has made an impression upon them. The critics should think rather of how they can effect changes in nature and in society, in order that those impressions may not exist. If ugliness were to vanish from the world, if universal virtue and felicity were established there, perhaps artists would no longer represent perverse or pessimistic sentiments, but sentiments that are calm, innocent, and joyous, like Arcadians of a real Arcady. But so long as ugliness and turpitude exist in nature and impose themselves on the artist, it is not possible to prevent the expression of these things also; and when it has arisen, *factum infectum fieri nequit.* We speak thus entirely from the æsthetic point of view, and from that of pure æsthetic criticism.

We do not delay to pass here in review the

damage which the criticism of choice does to artistic production, with the prejudices which it produces or maintains among the artists themselves, and with the contrast which it occasions between artistic impulse and critical exigencies. It is true that sometimes it seems to do some good also, by assisting the artists to discover themselves, that is, their own impressions and their own inspiration, and to acquire consciousness of the task which is, as it were, imposed upon them by the historical moment in which they live, and by their individual temperament. In these cases, criticism of choice merely recognizes and aids the expressions which are already being formed. It believes itself to be the mother, where, at most, it is only the midwife.

The independence of art.

The impossibility of choice of content completes the theorem of the *independence of art*, and is also the only legitimate meaning of the expression *art for art's sake*. Art is thus independent of science, as it is of the useful and the moral. Let it not be feared that thus may be justified art that is frivolous or cold, since that which is truly frivolous or cold is so because it has not been raised to expression; or in other words, frivolity and frigidity come always from the form of the æsthetic elaboration, from the

lack of a content, not from the material qualities of the content.

Critique of the saying: the style is the man.

The saying: *the style is the man*, can also not be completely criticized, save by starting from the distinction between the theoretic and the practical, and from the theoretic character of the æsthetic activity. Man is not simply knowledge and contemplation: he is also will, which contains in it the cognoscitive moment. Now the saying is either altogether void, as when it is understood that the man is the style, in so far as he is style, that is to say, the man, but only in so far as he is an expression of activity; or it is erroneous, when the attempt is made to deduce from what a man has seen and expressed, that which he has done and willed, inferring thereby that there is a necessary link between knowing and willing. Many legends in the biographies of artists have sprung from this erroneous identification, since it seemed impossible that a man who gives expression to generous sentiments should not be a noble and generous man in practical life; or that the dramatist who gives a great many stabs in his plays, should not himself have given a few at least in real life. Vainly do the artists protest: *lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba.* They are merely taxed in

addition with lying and hypocrisy. O you poor women of Verona, how far more subtle you were, when you founded your belief that Dante had really descended to hell, upon his dusky countenance! Yours was at any rate a historical conjecture.

Critique of the concept of sincerity in art.

Finally, *sincerity* imposed upon the artist as a duty (this law of ethics which, they say, is also a law of æsthetic) arises from another equivoke. For by sincerity is meant either the moral duty not to deceive one's neighbour; and in that case is foreign to the artist. For he, in fact, deceives no one, since he gives form to what is already in his mind. He would deceive, only if he were to betray his duty as an artist by a lesser devotion to the intrinsic necessity of his task. If lies and deceit are in his mind, then the form which he gives to these things cannot be deceit or lies, precisely because it is æsthetic. The artist, if he be a charlatan, a liar, or a miscreant, purifies his other self by reflecting it in art. Or by sincerity is meant, fulness and truth of expression, and it is clear that this second sense has nothing to do with the ethical concept. The law, which is at once ethical and æsthetic, reveals itself in this case in a word employed alike by Ethic and Æsthetic.

VII

ANALOGY BETWEEN THE THEORETIC AND THE PRACTICAL

The two forms of practical activity.

THE twofold grade of the theoretical activity, æsthetic and logical, has an important parallel in the practical activity, which has not yet been placed in due relief. The practical activity is also divided into a first and second degree, the second implying the first. The first practical degree is the simply *useful* or *economical* activity; the second the *moral* activity.

Economy is, as it were, the Æsthetic of practical life; Morality its Logic.

The economically useful.

If this has not been clearly seen by philosophers; if its suitable place in the system of the mind has not been given to the economic activity, and it has been left to wander in the prolegomena to treatises on political economy, often uncertain and but slightly elaborated, this is due, among other reasons, to the fact that the useful or economic has been confused, now

with the concept of *technique*, now with that of the *egoistic*.

Distinction between the useful and the technical.

Technique is certainly not a special activity of the spirit. Technique is knowledge; or better, it is knowledge itself, in general, that takes this name, as we have seen, in so far as it serves as basis for practical action. Knowledge which is not followed, or is presumed to be not easily followed by practical action, is called pure: the same knowledge, if effectively followed by action, is called applied; if it is presumed that it can be easily followed by the same action, it is called technical or applied. This word, then, indicates a *situation* in which knowledge already is, or easily can be found, not a special form of knowledge. So true is this, that it would be altogether impossible to establish whether a given order of knowledge were, intrinsically, pure or applied. All knowledge, however abstract and philosophical one may imagine it to be, can be a guide to practical acts; a theoretical error in the ultimate principles of morals can be reflected and always is reflected in some way, in practical life. One can only speak roughly and unscientifically of truths that are pure and of others that are applied.

The same knowledge which is called technical, can also be called *useful*. But the word "useful,"

in conformity with the criticism of judgments of value made above, is to be understood as used here in a linguistic or metaphorical sense. When we say that water is useful for putting out fire, the word "useful" is used in a non-scientific sense. Water thrown on the fire is the cause of its going out: this is the knowledge that serves for basis to the action, let us say, of firemen. There is a link, not of nature, but of simple succession, between the useful action of the person who extinguishes the conflagration, and this knowledge. The technique of the effects of the water is the theoretical activity which precedes; the *action* of him who extinguishes the fire is alone useful.

Distinction between the useful and the egoistic.

Some economists identify utility with *egoïsm*, that is to say, with merely economical action or desire, with that which is profitable to the individual, in so far as individual, without regard to and indeed in complete opposition to the moral law. The egoistic is the immoral. In this case Economy would be a very strange science, standing, not beside, but facing Ethic, like the devil facing God, or at least like the *advocatus diaboli* in the processes of canonization. Such a conception of it is altogether inadmissible: the science of immorality is implied in that of

morality, as the science of the false is implied in *Logic*, the science of the true, and a science of ineffectual expression in Æsthetic, the science of successful expression. If, then, Economy were the scientific treatment of egoism, it would be a chapter of Ethic, or Ethic itself; because every moral determination implies, at the same time, a negation of its contrary.

Further, conscience tells us that to conduct oneself economically is not to conduct oneself egoistically; that even the most morally scrupulous man must conduct himself usefully (economically), if he does not wish to be inconclusive and, therefore, not truly moral. If utility were egoism, how could it be the duty of the altruist to behave like an egoist?

Economic will and moral will.

If we are not mistaken, the difficulty is solved in a manner perfectly analogous to that in which is solved the problem of the relations between the expression and the concept, between Æsthetic and Logic.

To will economically is to *will an end*; to will morally is to *will the rational end.* But whoever wills and acts morally, cannot but will and act usefully (economically). How could he will the *rational*, unless he willed it also *as his particular end*?

The reciprocal is not true; as it is not true in æsthetic science that the expressive fact must of necessity be linked with the logical fact. It is possible to will economically without willing morally; and it is possible to conduct oneself with perfect economic coherence, while pursuing an end which is objectively irrational (immoral), or, better, an end which would be so judged in a superior grade of consciousness. *Pure economicity.*

Examples of the economic, without the moral character, are the Prince of Machiavelli, Cæsar Borgia, or the Iago of Shakespeare. Who can help admiring their strength of will, although their activity is only economic, and is opposed to what we hold moral? Who can help admiring the ser Ciappelletto of Boccaccio, who, even on his death-bed, pursues and realizes his ideal of the perfect rascal, making the small and timid little thieves who are present at his burlesque confession exclaim: "What manner of man is this, whose perversity, neither age, nor infirmity, nor the fear of death, which he sees at hand, nor the fear of God, before whose judgment-seat he must stand in a little while, have been able to remove, nor to cause that he should not wish to die as he has lived?"

The moral man unites with the pertinacity

The economic side of morality.

and fearlessness of a Cæsar Borgia, of an Iago, or of a ser Ciappelletto, the good will of the saint or of the hero. Or, better, good will would not be will, and consequently not good, if it did not possess, in addition to the side which makes it *good*, also that which makes it *will*. Thus a logical thought, which does not succeed in expressing itself, is not thought, but at the most, a confused presentiment of a thought yet to come.

It is not correct, then, to conceive of the amoral man as also the anti-economical man, or to make of morality an element of coherence in the acts of life, and therefore of economicity. Nothing prevents us from conceiving (an hypothesis which is verified at least during certain periods and moments, if not during whole lifetimes) a man altogether without moral conscience. In a man thus organized, what for us is immorality is not so for him, because it is not so felt. The consciousness of the contradiction between what is desired as a rational end and what is pursued egoistically cannot be born in him. This contradiction is anti-economicity. Immoral conduct becomes also anti-economical only in the man who possesses moral conscience. The moral remorse which is the proof of this, is also economical

remorse; that is to say, pain at not having known how to will completely and to attain to that moral ideal which was willed at the first moment, but was afterwards perverted by the passions. *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* The *video* and the *probo* are here an initial will immediately contradicted and passed over. In the man deprived of moral sense, we must admit a remorse which is *merely economic*; like that of a thief or of an assassin who should be attacked when on the point of robbing or of assassinating, and should abstain from doing so, not owing to a conversion of his being, but owing to his impressionability and bewilderment, or even owing to a momentary awakening of the moral consciousness. When he has come back to himself, that thief or assassin will regret and be ashamed of his inconsequence; his remorse will not be due to having done wrong, but to not having done it; his remorse is, therefore, economic, not moral, since the latter is excluded by hypothesis. However, a lively moral conscience is generally found among the majority of men, and its total absence is a rare and perhaps non-existent monstrosity. It may, therefore, be admitted, that morality coincides with economicity in the conduct of life.

There need be no fear lest the parallelism

The merely economic and the error of the morally indifferent.

affirmed by us should introduce afresh into science the category of the *morally indifferent*, of that which is in truth action and volition, but is neither moral nor immoral; the category in sum of the *licit* and of the *permissible*, which has always been the cause or mirror of ethical corruption, as is the case with Jesuitical morality in which it dominated. It remains quite certain that indifferent moral actions do not exist, because moral activity pervades and must pervade every least volitional movement of man. But this, far from upsetting the parallelism, confirms it. Do there exist intuitions which science and the intellect do not pervade and analyse, resolving them into universal concepts, or changing them into historical affirmations? We have already seen that true science, philosophy, knows no external limits which bar its way, as happens with the so-called natural sciences. Science and morality entirely dominate, the one the æsthetic intuitions, the other the economic volitions of man, although neither of them can appear in the concrete, save in the intuitive form as regards the one, in the economic as regards the other.

This combined identity and difference of the useful and of the moral, of the economic and

of the ethic, explains the fortune enjoyed now and formerly by the utilitarian theory of Ethic. It is in fact easy to discover and to show a utilitarian side in every moral action; as it is easy to show an æsthetic side of every logical proposition. The criticism of ethical utilitarianism cannot escape by denying this truth and seeking out absurd and inexistent examples of *useless* moral actions. It must admit the utilitarian side and explain it as the concrete form of morality, which consists of what is *within* this form. Utilitarians do not see this within. This is not the place for a more ample development of such ideas. Ethic and Economic cannot but be gainers, as we have said of Logic and Æsthetic, by a more exact determination of the relations that exist between them. Economic science is now rising to the animating concept of the useful, as it strives to pass beyond the mathematical phase, in which it is still entangled; a phase which, when it superseded historicism, was in its turn a progress, destroying a series of arbitrary distinctions and false theories of Economic, implied in the confusion of the theoretical with the historical. With this conception, it will be easy on the one hand to absorb and to verify the semi-philosophical

Critique of utilitarianism and the reform of Ethic and of Economic.

theories of so-called pure economy, and on the other, by the introduction of successive complications and additions, and by passing from the philosophical to the empirical or naturalistic method, to include the particular theories of the political or national economy of the schools.

Phenomenon and noumenon in practical activity.

As æsthetic intuition knows the phenomenon or nature, and philosophic intuition the noumenon or spirit; so economic activity wills the phenomenon or nature, and moral activity the noumenon or spirit. *The spirit which desires itself*, its true self, the universal which is in the empirical and finite spirit: that is the formula which perhaps defines the essence of morality with the least impropriety. This will for the true self is *absolute liberty*.

VIII

EXCLUSION OF OTHER SPIRITUAL FORMS

The system of the spirit.

In this summary sketch that we have given, of the entire philosophy of the spirit in its fundamental moments, the spirit is conceived as consisting of four moments or grades, disposed in such a way that the theoretical activity is to the practical as is the first theoretical grade to the second theoretical, and the first practical grade to the second practical. The four moments imply one another regressively by their concretion. The concept cannot be without expression, the useful without the one and the other, and morality without the three preceding grades. If the æsthetic fact is alone independent, and the others more or less dependent, then the logical is the least so and the moral will the most. Moral intention operates on given theoretic bases, which cannot be dispensed with, save by that absurd practice, the jesuitical *direction of intention.* Here people

pretend to themselves not to know what at bottom they know perfectly well.

The forms of genius.

If the forms of human activity are four, four also are the forms of genius. Geniuses in art, in science, in moral will or heroes, have certainly always been recognized. But the genius of pure Economic has met with opposition. It is not altogether without reason that a category of bad geniuses or of *geniuses of evil* has been created. The practical, merely economic genius, which is not directed to a rational end, cannot but excite an admiration mingled with alarm. It would be a mere question of words, were we to discuss whether the word "genius" should be applied only to creators of æsthetic expression, or also to men of scientific research and of action. To observe, on the other hand, that genius, of whatever kind it be, is always a quantitative conception and an empirical distinction, would be to repeat what has already been explained as regards artistic genius.

Non-existence of a fifth form of activity. Law; sociality.

A fifth form of spiritual activity does not exist. It would be easy to demonstrate how all the other forms, either do not possess the character of activity, or are verbal variants of the activities already examined, or are complex and derived facts, in which the various activities are mingled,

or are filled with special contents and contingent data.

The *judicial* fact, for example, considered as what is called objective law, is derived both from the economic and from the logical activities. Law is a rule, a formula (whether oral or written matters little here) in which is contained an economic relation willed by an individual or by a collectivity. This economic side at once unites it with and distinguishes it from moral activity. Take another example. Sociology (among the many meanings the word bears in our times) is sometimes conceived as the study of an original element, which is called *sociality*. Now what is it that distinguishes sociality, or the relations which are developed in a meeting of men, not of subhuman beings, if it be not just the various spiritual activities which exist among the former and which are supposed not to exist, or to exist only in a rudimentary degree, among the latter? Sociality, then, far from being an original, simple, irreducible conception, is very complex and complicated. This could be proved by the impossibility, generally recognized, of enunciating a single sociological law, properly so-called. Those that are improperly called by that name are revealed as either empirical

historical observations, or spiritual laws, that is to say judgments, into which are translated the conceptions of the spiritual activities; when they are not simply empty and indeterminate generalizations, like the so-called law of evolution. Sometimes, too, nothing more is understood by sociality than social rule, and so law; and thus sociology is confounded with the science or theory of law itself. Law, sociality, and like terms, are to be dealt with in a mode analogous to that employed by us in the consideration of historicity and technique.

Religiosity. It may seem fitting to form a different judgment as to *religious* activity. But religion is nothing but knowledge, and does not differ from its other forms and subforms. For it is in truth and in turn either the expression of practical and ideal aspirations (religious ideals), or historical narrative (legend), or conceptual science (dogma).

It can therefore be maintained with equal truth, both that religion is destroyed by the progress of human knowledge, and that it is always present there. Their religion was the whole patrimony of knowledge of primitive peoples: our patrimony of knowledge is our religion. The content has been changed, bettered, refined, and it will change and become better

and more refined in the future also; but its function is always the same. We do not know what use could be made of religion by those who wish to preserve it side by side with the theoretic activity of man, with his art, with his criticism, and with his philosophy. It is impossible to preserve an imperfect and inferior kind of knowledge, like religion, side by side with what has surpassed and disproved it. Catholicism, which is always coherent, will not tolerate a Science, a History, an Ethic, in contradiction to its views and doctrines. The rationalists are less coherent. They are disposed to allow a little space in their souls for a religion which is in contradiction with their whole theoretic world.

These affectations and religious susceptibilities of the rationalists of our times have their origin in the superstitious cult of the natural sciences. These, as we know and as is confessed by the mouth of their chief adepts, are all surrounded by *limits*. Science having been wrongly identified with the so-called natural sciences, it could be foreseen that the remainder would be asked of religion; that remainder with which the human spirit cannot dispense. We are therefore indebted to materialism, to positivism,

to naturalism for this unhealthy and often disingenuous reflowering of religious exaltation. Such things are the business of the hospital, when they are not the business of the politician.

Philosophy withdraws from religion all reason for existing, because it substitutes itself for religion. As the science of the spirit, it looks upon religion as a phenomenon, a transitory historical fact, a psychic condition that can be surpassed. Philosophy shares the domain of knowledge with the natural disciplines, with history and with art. It leaves to the first, narration, measurement and classification; to the second, the chronicling of what has individually happened; to the third, the individually possible. There is nothing left to share with religion.

Metaphysic. For the same reason, philosophy, as the science of the spirit, cannot be philosophy of the intuitive datum; nor, as has been seen, *Philosophy of History, nor Philosophy of Nature*; and therefore there cannot be a philosophic science of what is not form and universal, but material and particular. This amounts to affirming the impossibility of *metaphysic.*

The Method or Logic of history followed the Philosophy of history; a gnoseology of the conceptions which are employed in the natural

sciences succeeded natural philosophy. What philosophy can study of the one is its mode of construction (intuition, perception, document, probability, etc.); of the others she can study the forms of the conceptions which appear in them (space, time, motion, number, types, classes, etc.). Philosophy, which should become metaphysical in the sense above described, would, on the other hand, claim to compete with narrative history, and with the natural sciences, which in their field are alone legitimate and effective. Such a competition becomes in fact a labour spoiling labour. We are *antimetaphysical* in this sense, while yet declaring ourselves *ultrametaphysical*, if by that word it be desired to claim and to affirm the function of philosophy as the autoconsciousness of the spirit, as opposed to the merely empirical and classificatory function of the natural sciences.

Mental imagination and the intuitive intellect.

In order to maintain itself side by side with the sciences of the spirit, metaphysic has been obliged to assert the existence of a specific spiritual activity, of which it would be the product. This activity, which in antiquity was called *mental or superior imagination*, and in modern times more often *intuitive intellect or intellectual intuition*, would unite in an altogether special form the characters of imagination and of intellect.

It would provide the method of passing, by deduction or dialectically, from the infinite to the finite, from form to matter, from the concept to the intuition, from science to history, operating by a method which should be at once unity and compenetration of the universal and the particular, of the abstract and the concrete, of intuition and of intellect. A faculty marvellous indeed and delightful to possess; but we, who do not possess it, have no means of proving its existence.

Mystical æsthetic.

Intellectual intuition has sometimes been considered as the true æsthetic activity. At others a not less marvellous æsthetic activity has been placed beside, below, or above it, a faculty altogether different from simple intuition. The glories of this faculty have been sung, and to it have been attributed the fact of art, or at the least certain groups of artistic production, arbitrarily chosen. Art, religion, and philosophy have seemed in turn one only, or three distinct faculties of the spirit, now one, now another of these being superior in the dignity assigned to each.

It is impossible to enumerate all the various attitudes assumed by this conception of Æsthetic, which we will call *mystical*. We are here in the kingdom, not of the science of imagination, but of imagination itself, which creates its world with

the varying elements of the impressions and of the feelings. Let it suffice to mention that this mysterious faculty has been conceived, now as practical, now as a mean between the theoretic and the practical, at others again as a theoretic grade together with philosophy and religion.

Mortality and immortality of art.

The immortality of art has sometimes been deduced from this last conception as belonging with its sisters to the sphere of absolute spirit. At other times, on the other hand, when religion has been looked upon as mortal and as dissolved in philosophy, then the mortality, even the actual death, or at least the agony of art has been proclaimed. These questions have no meaning for us, because, seeing that the function of art is a necessary grade of the spirit, to ask if art can be eliminated is the same thing as asking if sensation or intelligence can be eliminated. But metaphysic, in the above sense, since it transplants itself to an arbitrary world, is not to be criticized in detail, any more than one can criticize the botany of the garden of Alcina or the navigation of the voyage of Astolfo. Criticism can only be made by refusing to join the game; that is to say, by rejecting the very possibility of metaphysic, always in the sense above indicated.

As we do not admit intellectual intuition in

philosophy, we can also not admit its shadow or equivalent, æsthetic intellectual intuition, or any other mode by which this imaginary function may be called and represented. We repeat again that we do not know of a fifth grade beyond the four grades of spirit which consciousness reveals to us.

IX

INDIVISIBILITY OF EXPRESSION INTO MODES OR GRADES AND CRITIQUE OF RHETORIC

The characteristics of art.

IT is customary to give long enumerations of the characteristics of art. Having reached this point of the treatise, having studied the artistic function as spiritual activity, as theoretic activity, and as special theoretic activity (intuitive), we are able to discern that those various and copious descriptions mean, when they mean anything at all, nothing but a repetition of what may be called the qualities of the æsthetic function, generic, specific, and characteristic. To the first of these are referred, as we have already observed, the characters, or better, the verbal variants of *unity*, and of *unity* in *variety*, those also of *simplicity*, of *originality*, and so on; to the second of these, the characteristics of *truth*, of *sincerity*, and the like; to the third, the characteristics of *life*, of *vivacity*, of *animation*, of *concretion*, of *individuality*, of *characteristicality*. The words may vary yet

more, but they will not contribute anything scientifically new. The results which we have shown have altogether exhausted the analysis of expression as such.

Inexistence of modes of expression.

But at this point, the question as to whether there be various *modes or grades* of expression is still perfectly legitimate. We have distinguished two grades of activity, each of which is subdivided into two other grades, and there is certainly, so far, no visible logical reason why there should not exist two or more modes of the æsthetic, that is of expression.—The only objection is that these modes do not exist.

For the present at least, it is a question of simple internal observation and of self consciousness. One may scrutinize æsthetic facts as much as one will: no formal differences will ever be found among them, nor will the æsthetic fact be divisible into a first and a second degree.

This signifies that a philosophical classification of expressions is not possible. Single expressive facts are so many individuals, of which the one cannot be compared with the other, save generically, in so far as each is expression. To use the language of the schools, expression is a species which cannot in its turn perform the

functions of genus. Impressions, that is to say contents, vary; every content differs from every other content, because nothing in life repeats itself; and the continuous variation of contents follows the irreducible variety of expressive facts, the æsthetic syntheses of the impressions.

Impossibility of translations.

A corollary of this is the impossibility of *translations*, in so far as they pretend to effect the transference of one expression into another, like a liquid poured from a vase of a certain shape into a vase of another shape. We can elaborate logically what we have already elaborated in æsthetic form only; but we cannot reduce that which has already possessed its æsthetic form to another form also æsthetic. In truth, every translation either diminishes and spoils; or it creates a new expression, by putting the former back into the crucible and mixing it with other impressions belonging to the pretended translator. In the former case, the expression always remains one, that of the original, the translation being more or less deficient, that is to say, not properly expression: in the other case, there would certainly be two expressions, but with two different contents. "Ugly faithful ones or faithless beauties" is a proverb that well expresses the dilemma with which every trans-

lator is faced. Inæsthetic translations, such as those which are word for word or interlinear, or paraphrastic translations, are to be looked upon as simple commentaries on the original.

Critique of rhetorical categories.

The division of expressions into various classes is known in literature by the name of theory of *ornament* or of *rhetorical categories.* But similar attempts at classification in the other forms of art are not wanting: suffice it to mention the *realistic and symbolic* forms, spoken of in painting and sculpture.

The scientific value to be attached in Æsthetic and in æsthetic criticism to these distinctions of *realistic and symbolic*, of *style and absence of style*, of *objective and subjective*, of *classic and romantic*, of *simple and ornate*, of *proper and metaphorical*, of the fourteen forms of metaphor, of the figures of *word* and of *sentence*, and further of *pleonasm*, of *ellipse*, of *inversion*, of *repetition*, of *synonyms and homonyms*, and so on; is *nil* or altogether negative. To none of these terms and distinctions can be given a satisfactory æsthetic definition. Those that have been attempted, when they are not obviously erroneous, are words devoid of sense. A typical example of this is the very common definition of metaphor as of *another word used in place*

of the word itself. Now why give oneself this trouble? Why take the worse and longer road when you know the shorter and better road? Perhaps, as is generally said, because the correct word is in certain cases not so *expressive* as the so-called incorrect word or metaphor? But in that case the metaphor becomes exactly the right word, and the so-called right word, if it were used, would be *but little expressive* and therefore most improper. Similar observations of elementary good sense can be made regarding the other categories, as, for example, the generic one of the ornate. One can ask oneself how an ornament can be joined to expression. Externally? In that case it must always remain separate. Internally? In that case, either it does not assist expression and mars it; or it does form part of it and is not ornament, but a constituent element of expression, indistinguishable from the whole.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the harm done by these distinctions. Rhetoric has often been declaimed against, but although there has been rebellion against its consequences, its principles have been carefully preserved, perhaps in order to show proof of philosophic coherence. Rhetoric has contributed, if not to make dominant

in literary production, at least to justify theoretically, that particular mode of writing ill which is called fine writing or writing according to rhetoric.

Empirical sense of the rhetorical categories.

The terms above mentioned would never have gone beyond the schools, where we all of us learned them (certain of never finding the opportunity of using them in strictly æsthetic discussions, or even of doing so jocosely and with a comic intention), save when occasionally employed in one of the following significations: as *verbal variants* of the æsthetic concept; as indications of the *anti-æsthetic*, or, finally (and this is their most important use), in a sense which is no longer æsthetic and literary, but *merely logical.*

Use of these categories as synonyms of the æsthetic fact.

Expressions are not divisible into classes, but some are successful, others half-successful, others failures. There are perfect and imperfect, complete and deficient expressions. The terms already cited, then, sometimes indicate the successful expression, sometimes the various forms of the failures. But they are employed in the most inconstant and capricious manner, for it often happens that the same word serves, now to proclaim the perfect, now to condemn the imperfect.

An instance of this is found when someone,

criticizing two pictures—the one without inspiration, in which the author has copied natural objects without intelligence; the other inspired, but without obvious likeness to existing objects —calls the first *realistic*, the second *symbolic*. Others, on the contrary, pronounce the word *realistic* about a strongly felt picture representing a scene of ordinary life, while they talk of *symbolic* in reference to another picture representing but a cold allegory. It is evident that in the first case symbolic means artistic, and realistic inartistic, while in the second, realistic is synonymous with artistic and symbolic with inartistic. How, then, can we be astonished when some hotly maintain that the true art form is the symbolic, and that the realistic is inartistic; others, that the realistic is the artistic, and the symbolic the inartistic? We cannot but grant that both are right, since each makes use of the same words in senses so diverse.

The great disputes about the *classic* and the *romantic* are frequently based upon such equivokes. Sometimes the former was understood as the artistically perfect, and the second as lacking balance and imperfect; at others, the classic was cold and artificial, the romantic sincere, warm, efficacious, and truly expressive. Thus it was

always possible to take the side of the classic against the romantic, or of the romantic against the classic.

The same thing happens as regards the word *style*. Sometimes it is affirmed that every writer should have style. Here style is synonymous with form or expression. Sometimes the form of a code of laws or of a mathematical work is said to be devoid of style. Here the error of admitting diverse modes of expression is again committed, of admitting an ornate and a naked form of expression, because, since style is form, the code and the mathematical treatise must also, strictly speaking, have each its style. At other times, one hears the critics blaming someone for "having too much style" or for "writing a style." Here it is clear that style signifies, not the form, nor a mode of it, but improper and pretentious expression, which is one form of the inartistic.

Their use to indicate various æsthetic imperfections.

Passing to the second, not altogether insignificant, use of these words and distinctions, we sometimes find in the examination of a literary composition such remarks as follow: here is a pleonasm, here an ellipse, there a metaphor, here again a synonym or an equivoke. This means that in one place is an error consisting of using a larger number of words than is necessary

(pleonasm); that in another the error arises from too few having been used (ellipse), elsewhere from the use of an unsuitable word (metaphor), or from the use of two words which seem to express two different things, where they really express the same thing (synonym); or that, on the contrary, it arises from having employed one which seems to express the same thing where it expresses two different things (equivoke). This pejorative and pathological use of the terms is, however, more uncommon than the preceding.

Their use in a sense transcending æsthetic, in the service of science.

Finally, when rhetorical terminology possesses no æsthetic signification similar or analogous to those passed in review, and yet one is aware that it is not void of meaning and designates something that deserves to be noted, it is then used in the service of logic and of science. If it be granted that a concept used in a scientific sense by a given writer is expressed with a definite term, it is natural that other words formed by that writer as used to signify the same concept, or incidentally made use of by him, become, *in respect to* the vocabulary fixed upon by him as true, metaphors, synecdoches, synonyms, elliptic forms, and the like. We, too, in the course of this treatise, have several times made use of, and intend again to make use of such terms, in order

to make clear the sense of the words we employ, or may find employed. But this proceeding, which is of value in the disquisitions of scientific and intellectual criticism, has none whatever in æsthetic criticism. For science there exist appropriate words and metaphors. The same concept may be psychologically formed in various circumstances and therefore be expressed with various intuitions. When the scientific terminology of a given writer has been established, and one of these modes has been fixed as correct, then all other uses of it become improper or tropical. But in the æsthetic fact exist only appropriate words. The same intuition can only be expressed in one way, precisely because it is an intuition and not a concept.

Rhetoric in the schools.

Some, while they admit the æsthetic insufficiency of the rhetorical categories, yet make a reserve as regards their utility and the service they are supposed to render, especially in schools of literature. We confess that we fail to understand how error and confusion can educate the mind to logical clearness, or aid the teaching of a science which they disturb and obscure. Perhaps it may be desired to say that they can aid memory and learning as empirical classes, as was admitted above for literary and artistic styles. But there

is another purpose for which the rhetorical categories should certainly continue to be admitted to the schools: to be criticized there. We cannot simply forget the errors of the past, and truth cannot be kept alive, save by making it fight against error. Unless a notion of the rhetorical categories be given, accompanied by a suitable criticism of these, there is a risk of their springing up again. For they are already springing up with certain philologists, disguised as most recent *psychological* discoveries.

The resemblances of expressions.

It would seem as though we wished to deny all bond of likeness among themselves between expressions and works of art. The likenesses exist, and owing to them, works of art can be arranged in this or that group. But they are likenesses such as are observed among individuals, and can never be rendered with abstract definitions. That is to say, these likenesses have nothing to do with identification, subordination, co-ordination, and the other relations of concepts. They consist wholly in what is called a *family likeness*, and are connected with those historical conditions existing at the birth of the various works, or in an affinity of soul between the artists.

It is in these resemblances that lies the *relative*

The relative possibility of translations.

possibility of translations. This does not consist of the reproduction of the same original expressions (which it would be vain to attempt), but in the measure that expressions are given, more or less nearly resembling those. The translation that passes for good is an approximation which has original value as a work of art and can stand by itself.

X

ÆSTHETIC FEELINGS AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE UGLY AND THE BEAUTIFUL

PASSING on to the study of more complex concepts, where the æsthetic activity is found in conjunction with other orders of facts, and showing the mode of this union or complication, we find ourselves at once face to face with the concept of *feeling* and with the feelings which are called *æsthetic.*

Various significations of the word feeling.

The word "feeling" is one of the richest in meanings. We have already had occasion to meet with it once, among those used to designate the spirit in its passivity, the matter or content of art, and also as synonym of *impressions.* Once again (and then the meaning was altogether different), we have met with it as designating the *non-logical* and *non-historical* character of the æsthetic fact, that is to say pure intuition, a form of truth which defines no concept and states no fact.

But feeling is not here understood in either

Feeling as activity.

of these two senses, nor in the others in which it has nevertheless been used to designate other *cognoscitive* forms of spirit. Its meaning here is that of a special activity, of non-cognoscitive nature, but possessing its two poles, positive and negative, in *pleasure* and *pain*. This activity has always greatly embarrassed philosophers, who have attempted either to deny it as an activity, or to attribute it to *nature* and to exclude it from spirit. Both solutions bristle with difficulties, and these are of such a kind that the solutions prove themselves finally unacceptable to anyone who examines them with care. For of what could a non-spiritual activity consist, an *activity of nature*, when we have no other knowledge of activity save as spiritual, and of spirituality save as activity? Nature is, in this case, by definition, the merely passive, inert, mechanical and material. On the other hand, the negation of the character of activity to feeling is energetically disproved by those very poles of pleasure and of pain which appear in it and manifest activity in its concreteness, and, we will say, all aquiver.

Identification of feeling with economic activity.

This critical conclusion ought to place us in the greatest embarrassment, for in the sketch of the system of the spirit given above, we have left

no room for the new activity, of which we are now obliged to recognize the existence. But activity of feeling, if it be activity, is not specially new. It has already had its place assigned to it in the system which we have sketched, where, however, it has been indicated under another name, as *economic* activity. What is called the activity of feeling is nothing but that more elementary and fundamental practical activity, which we have distinguished from ethical activity, and made to consist of the appetite and desire for some individual end, without any moral determination.

If feeling has been sometimes considered as organic or natural activity, this has happened precisely because it does not coincide either with logical, æsthetic, or ethical activity. Looked at from the standpoint of these three (which were the only ones admitted), it has seemed to lie *outside* the true and real spirit, the spirit in its aristocracy, and to be almost a determination of nature and of the soul, in so far as it is nature. Thus the thesis, several times maintained, that the æsthetic activity, like the ethical and intellectual activities, is not feeling, becomes at once completely proved. This thesis was inexpugnable, when sensation had already been reduced con-

fusedly and implicitly to economic volition. The view which has been refuted is known by the name of *hedonism.* For hedonism, all the various forms of the spirit are reduced to one, which thus itself also loses its own distinctive character and becomes something turbid and mysterious, like "the shades in which all cows are black." Having effected this reduction and mutilation, the hedonists naturally do not succeed in seeing anything else in any activity but pleasure and pain. They find no substantial difference between the pleasure of art and that of an easy digestion, between the pleasure of a good action and that of breathing the fresh air with wide-expanded lungs.

Critique of hedonism.

But if the activity of feeling in the sense here defined must not be substituted for all the other forms of spiritual activity, we have not said that it cannot *accompany* them. Indeed it accompanies them of necessity, because they are all in close relation, both with one another and with the elementary volitional form. Therefore each of them has for concomitants individual volitions and volitional pleasures and pains which are known as feeling. But we must not confound what is concomitant, with the principal fact, and take the one for the other. The discovery of the truth, or the satisfaction of a moral duty fulfilled, produces

Feeling as a concomitant to every form of activity.

in us a joy which makes our whole being vibrate, for, by attaining to those forms of spiritual activity, it attains at the same time that to which it was *practically* tending, as to its end, during the effort. Nevertheless, economic or hedonistic satisfaction, ethical satisfaction, æsthetic satisfaction, intellectual satisfaction, remain always distinct, even when in union.

Thus is solved at the same time the much-debated question, which has seemed, not wrongly, a matter of life or death for æsthetic science, namely, whether the feeling and the pleasure precede or follow, are cause or effect of the æsthetic fact. We must enlarge this question, to include the relation between the various spiritual forms, and solve it in the sense that in the unity of the spirit one cannot talk of cause and effect and of what comes first and what follows it in time.

And once the relation above exposed is established, the statements, which it is customary to make, as to the nature of æsthetic, moral, intellectual, and even, as is sometimes said, economic feelings, must also fall. In this last case, it is clear that it is a question, not of two terms, but of one, and the quest of economic feeling can be but that same one concerning the

economic activity. But in the other cases also, the search can never be directed to the substantive, but to the adjective: æsthetic, morality, logic, explain the colouring of the feelings as æsthetic, moral, and intellectual, while feeling, studied alone, will never explain those refractions.

Meaning of certain ordinary distinctions of feelings.

A further consequence is, that we can free ourselves from the distinction between values or feelings *of value*, and feelings that are merely hedonistic and *without value*; also from other similar distinctions, like those between *disinterested* feelings and *interested* feelings, between *objective* feelings and the others that are not *objective* but simply *subjective*, between feelings of *approval* and others of *mere pleasure* (*Gefallen* and *Vergnügen* of the Germans). Those distinctions strove hard to save the three spiritual forms, which have been recognised as the triad of the *True*, the *Good*, and the *Beautiful*, from confusion with the fourth form, still unknown, yet insidious through its indeterminateness, and mother of scandals. For us this triad has finished its task, because we are capable of reaching the distinction far more directly, by welcoming even the selfish, subjective, merely pleasurable feelings, among the respectable forms of the spirit; and where formerly antitheses

were conceived of by ourselves and others, between value and feelings, as between spirituality and naturality, henceforth we see nothing but difference between value and value.

Value and disvalue: the contraries and their union.

As has already been said, the economic feeling or activity reveals itself as divided into two poles, positive and negative, pleasure and pain, which we can now translate into useful, and useless or hurtful. This bipartition has already been noted above, as a mark of the active character of feeling, precisely because the same bipartition is found in all forms of activity. If each of these is a *value*, each has opposed to it *antivalue or disvalue.* Absence of value is not sufficient to cause disvalue, but activity and passivity must be struggling between themselves, without the one getting the better of the other; hence the contradiction, and the disvalue of the activity that is embarrassed, contested, or interrupted. Value is activity that unfolds itself freely: disvalue is its contrary.

We will content ourselves with this definition of the two terms, without entering into the problem of the relation between value and disvalue, that is, between the problem of contraries. (Are these to be thought of dualistically, as two beings or two orders of beings, like

Ormuzd and Ahriman, angels and devils, enemies to one another; or as a unity, which is also contrariety?) This definition of the two terms will be sufficient for our purpose, which is to make clear æsthetic activity in particular, and one of the most obscure and disputed concepts of Æsthetic which arises at this point: the concept of the *Beautiful.*

The Beautiful as the value of expression, or expression and nothing more.

Æsthetic, intellectual, economic, and ethical values and disvalues are variously denominated in current speech: *beautiful, true, good, useful, just,* and so on—these words designate the free development of spiritual activity, action, scientific research, artistic production, when they are successful; *ugly, false, bad, useless, unbecoming, unjust, inexact* designate embarrassed activity, the product of which is a failure. In linguistic usage, these denominations are being continually shifted from one order of facts to another, and from this to that. *Beautiful,* for instance, is said not only of a successful expression, but also of a scientific truth, of an action successfully achieved, and of a moral action: thus we talk of an *intellectual beauty,* of a *beautiful action,* of a *moral beauty.* Many philosophers, especially æstheticians, have lost their heads in their pursuit of these most varied uses: they have entered an inextricable

and impervious verbal labyrinth. For this reason it has hitherto seemed convenient studiously to avoid the use of the word beautiful to indicate successful expression. But after all the explanations that have been given, and all danger of misunderstanding being now dissipated, and since, on the other hand, we cannot fail to recognize that the prevailing tendency, alike in current speech and in philosophy, is to limit the meaning of the vocable *beautiful* altogether to the æsthetic value, we may define beauty as *successful expression*, or better, as *expression* and nothing more, because expression, when it is not successful, is not expression.

The ugly, and the elements of beauty which compose it.

Consequently, the ugly is unsuccessful expression. The paradox is true, that, in works of art that are failures, the beautiful is present as *unity* and the ugly as *multiplicity*. Thus, with regard to works of art that are more or less failures, we talk of qualities, that is to say of *those parts of them that are beautiful*. We do not talk thus of perfect works. It is in fact impossible to enumerate their qualities or to designate those parts of them that are beautiful. In them there is complete fusion: they have but one quality. Life circulates in the whole organism: it is not withdrawn into certain parts.

The qualities of works that are failures may be of various degrees. They may even be very great. The beautiful does not possess degrees, for there is no conceiving a more beautiful, that is, an expressive that is more expressive, an adequate that is more than adequate. Ugliness, on the other hand, does possess degrees, from the rather ugly (or almost beautiful) to the extremely ugly. But if the ugly were *complete*, that is to say, without any element of beauty, it would for that very reason cease to be ugly, because in it would be absent the contradiction which is the reason of its existence. The disvalue would become nonvalue; activity would give place to passivity, with which it is not at war, save when there effectively is war.

Illusions that there exist expressions which are neither beautiful nor ugly.

And because the distinctive consciousness of the beautiful and of the ugly is based on the contrasts and contradictions in which æsthetic activity is developed, it is evident that this consciousness becomes attenuated to the point of disappearing altogether, as we descend from the more complicated to the more simple and to the simplest cases of expression. From this arises the illusion that there are expressions which are neither beautiful nor ugly, those which are obtained without sensible effort and appear easy and natural being so considered.

The whole mystery of the *beautiful* and the *ugly* is reduced to these henceforth most easy definitions. Should any one object that there exist perfect æsthetic expressions before which no pleasure is felt, and others, perhaps even failures, which give him the greatest pleasure, it is necessary to advise him to pay great attention, as regards the æsthetic fact, to that only which is truly æsthetic pleasure. Æsthetic pleasure is sometimes reinforced by pleasures arising from extraneous facts, which are only casually found united with it. The poet or any other artist affords an instance of purely æsthetic pleasure, during the moment in which he sees (or has the intuition of) his work for the first time; that is to say, when his impressions take form and his countenance is irradiated with the divine joy of the creator. On the other hand, a mixed pleasure is experienced by any one who goes to the theatre, after a day's work, to witness a comedy: when the pleasure of rest and amusement, and that of laughingly snatching a nail from the gaping coffin, is accompanied at a certain moment by real æsthetic pleasure, obtained from the art of the dramatist and of the actors. The same may be said of the artist who looks upon his labour with pleasure, when

True æsthetic feelings and concomitant or accidental feelings.

it is finished, experiencing, in addition to the æsthetic pleasure, that very different one which arises from the thought of self-love satisfied, or of the economic gain which will come to him from his work. Examples could be multiplied.

Critique of apparent feelings.

A category of *apparent* æsthetic feelings has been formed in modern Æsthetic. These have nothing to do with the æsthetic sensations of pleasure arising from the form, that is to say from the work of art. On the contrary, they arise from the content of the work of art. It has been observed that "artistic representations arouse pleasure and pain in their infinite variety and gradations. We tremble with anxiety, we rejoice, we fear, we laugh, we weep, we desire, with the personages of a drama or of a romance, with the figures in a picture, or with the melody of music. But these feelings are not those that would give occasion to the real fact outside art; that is to say, they are the same in quality, but they are quantitively an attenuation. Æsthetic and *apparent* pleasure and pain are slight, of little depth, and changeable." We have no need to treat of these *apparent feelings*, for the good reason that we have already amply discussed them; indeed, we have treated of them alone. What are ever feelings that

become apparent or manifest, but feelings objectified, intensified, expressed? And it is natural that they do not trouble and agitate us passionately, as do those of real life, because those were matter, these are form and activity; those true and proper feelings, these intuitions and expressions. The formula, then, of *apparent feelings* is nothing but a tautology. The best that can be done is to run the pen through it.

XI

CRITIQUE OF ÆSTHETIC HEDONISM

As we are opposed to hedonism in general, that is to say, to the theory which is based on the pleasure and pain intrinsic to Economy and accompanies every other form of activity, confounding the content and that which contains it, and fails to recognize any process but the hedonistic; so we are opposed to æsthetic hedonism in particular, which looks upon the æsthetic at any rate, if not also upon all other activities, as a simple fact of feeling, and confounds the *pleasurable of expression*, which is the beautiful, with the pleasurable and nothing more, and with the pleasurable of all sorts.

Critique of the beautiful as that which pleases the higher senses.

The æsthetic-hedonistic point of view has been presented in several forms. One of the most ancient conceives the beautiful as that which pleases the sight and hearing, that is to say, the so-called superior senses. When analysis of æsthetic facts first began, it was, in fact,

difficult to avoid the mistake of thinking that a picture and a piece of music are impressions of sight or of hearing: it was and is an indisputable fact that the blind man does not enjoy the picture, nor the deaf man the music. To show, as we have shown, that the æsthetic fact does not depend upon the nature of the impressions, but that all sensible impressions can be raised to æsthetic expression and that none need of necessity be so raised, is an idea which presents itself only when all the other ways out of the difficulty have been tried. But whoso imagines that the æsthetic fact is something pleasing to the eyes or to the hearing, has no line of defence against him who proceeds logically to identify the beautiful with the pleasurable in general, and includes cooking in Æsthetic, or, as some positivist has done, the viscerally beautiful.

Critique of the theory of play.

The theory of *play* is another form of æsthetic hedonism. The conception of play has sometimes helped towards the realization of the actifying character of the expressive fact: man (it has been said) is not really man, save when he begins to play; that is to say, when he frees himself from natural and mechanical causality and operates spiritually; and his first game is art. But since the word *play* also means that pleasure which

arises from the expenditure of the exuberant energy of the organism (that is to say, from a practical act), the consequence of this theory has been, that every game has been called an æsthetic fact, and that the æsthetic function has been called a game, in so far as it is possible to play with it, for, like science and every other thing, Æsthetic can be made part of a game. But morality cannot be provoked at the intention of playing, on the ground that it does not consent; on the contrary, it dominates and regulates the act of playing itself.

Critique of the theories of sexuality and of the triumph.

Finally, there have been some who have tried to deduce the pleasure of art from the reaction of the sexual organs. There are some very modern æstheticians who place the genesis of the æsthetic fact in the pleasure of *conquering*, of *triumphing*, or, as others add, in the desire of the male, who wishes to conquer the female. This theory is seasoned with much anecdotal erudition, Heaven knows of what degree of credibility! on the customs of savage peoples. But in very truth there was no necessity for such important aid, for one often meets in ordinary life poets who adorn themselves with their poetry, like cocks that raise their crests, or turkeys that spread their tails. But he who does such things, in so far as he does

them, is not a poet, but a poor devil of a cock or turkey. The conquest of woman does not suffice to explain the art fact. It would be just as correct to term poetry *economic*, because there have been aulic and stipendiary poets, and there are poets the sale of whose verses helps them to gain their livelihood, if it does not altogether provide it. However, this definition has not failed to win over some zealous neophytes of historical materialism.

Critique of the Æsthetic of the sympathetic. Meaning in it of content and form.

Another less vulgar current of thought considers Æsthetic to be the science of the *sympathetic*, of that with which we sympathize, which attracts, rejoices, gives us pleasure and excites admiration. But the sympathetic is nothing but the image or representation of what pleases. And, as such, it is a complex fact, resulting from a constant element, the æsthetic element of representation, and from a variable element, the pleasing in its infinite forms, arising from all the various classes of values.

In ordinary language, there is sometimes a feeling of repugnance at calling an expression beautiful, which is not an expression of the sympathetic. Hence the continual contrast between the point of view of the æsthetician or of the art critic and that of the ordinary person, who cannot

succeed in persuading himself that the image of pain and of turpitude can be beautiful, or, at least, can be beautiful with as much right as the pleasing and the good.

The opposition could be solved by distinguishing two different sciences, one of expression and the other of the sympathetic, if the latter could be the object of a special science; that is to say, if it were not, as has been shown, a complex fact. If predominance be given to the expressive fact, it becomes a part of Æsthetic as science of expression; if to the pleasurable content, we fall back to the study of facts which are essentially hedonistic (utilitarian), however complicated they may appear. The origin, also, of the connexion between content and form is to be sought for in the Æsthetic of the sympathetic, when this is conceived as the sum of two values.

Æsthetic hedonism and moralism.

In all the doctrines just now discussed, the art fact is posited as merely hedonistic. But this view cannot be maintained, save by uniting it with a philosophic hedonism that is complete and not partial, that is to say, with a hedonism which does not admit any other form of value. Hardly has this hedonistic conception of art been received by philosophers, who admit one or more spiritual values, of truth or of morality, than the following

question must necessarily be asked: What should be done with art? To what use should it be put? Should a free course be allowed to its pleasures? And if so, to what extent? The question of the *end of art*, which in the Æsthetic of expression would be a contradiction of terms, here appears in place, and altogether logical.

The rigoristic negation, and the pedagogic justification of art.

Now it is evident that, admitting the premisses, but two solutions of such a question can be given, the one altogether negative, the other restrictive. The first, which we shall call *rigoristic* or *ascetic*, appears several times, although not frequently, in the history of ideas. It looks upon art as an inebriation of the senses, and therefore, not only useless, but harmful. According to this theory, then, it is necessary to drive it with all our strength from the human soul, which it troubles. The other solution, which we shall call *pedagogic* or *moralistico-utilitarian*, admits art, but only in so far as it concurs with the end of morality; in so far as it assists with innocent pleasure the work of him who leads to the true and the good; in so far as it sprinkles with dulcet balm the sides of the vase of wisdom and of morality.

It is well to observe that it would be an error to divide this second view into intellectualist and

moralistico-utilitarian, according to whether the end of leading to the true or to what is practically good, be assigned to art. The task of instructing, which is imposed upon it, precisely because it is an end which is sought after and advised, is no longer merely a theoretical fact, but a theoretical fact become the material for practical action; it is not, therefore, intellectualism, but pedagogism and practicism. Nor would it be more exact to subdivide the pedagogic view into the pure utilitarian and the moralistico-utilitarian; because those who admit only the individually useful (the desire of the individual), precisely because they are absolute hedonists, have no motive for seeking an ulterior justification for art.

But to enunciate these theories at the point to which we have attained is to confute them. We therefore restrict ourselves to observing that in the pedagogic theory of art is to be found another of the reasons why it has been erroneously claimed that the content of art should be *chosen* with a view to certain practical effects.

Critique of pure beauty.

The thesis, re-echoed by the artists, that art consists of *pure beauty*, has often been brought forward against hedonistic and pedagogic Æsthetic: "Heaven places All our joy in *pure beauty*, and the Verse is everything." If it is

wished that this should be understood in the sense that art is not to be confounded with sensual pleasure, that is, in fact, with utilitarian practicism, nor with moralism, then our Æsthetic also must be permitted to adorn itself with the title of *Æsthetic of pure beauty*. But if (as is often the case) something mystical and transcendental be meant by this, something that is unknown to our poor human world, or something spiritual and beatific, but not expressive, we must reply that while applauding the conception of a beauty, free of all that is not the spiritual form of expression, we are yet unable to conceive a beauty altogether purified of expression, that is to say, separated from itself.

XII

THE ÆSTHETIC OF THE SYMPATHETIC AND PSEUDO-ÆSTHETIC CONCEPTS

Pseudo-æsthetic concepts, and the æsthetic of the sympathetic.

THE doctrine of the sympathetic (very often animated and seconded in this by the capricious metaphysical and mystical Æsthetic, and by that blind tradition which assumes an intimate connection between things by chance treated of together by the same authors and in the same books), has introduced and rendered familiar in systems of Æsthetic, a series of concepts, of which one example suffices to justify our resolute expulsion of them from our own treatise.

Their catalogue is long, not to say interminable: *tragic*, *comic*, *sublime*, *pathetic*, *moving*, *sad*, *ridiculous*, *melancholy*, *tragi-comic*, *humoristic*, *majestic*, *dignified*, *serious*, *grave*, *imposing*, *noble*, *decorous*, *graceful*, *attractive*, *piquant*, *coquettish*, *idyllic*, *elegiac*, *cheerful*, *violent*, *ingenuous*, *cruel*, *base*, *horrible*, *disgusting*, *dreadful*, *nauseating*; the list can be increased at will.

Since that doctrine took as its special object the sympathetic, it was naturally unable to neglect any of the varieties of this, or any of the combinations or gradations which lead at last from the sympathetic to the antipathetic. And seeing that the sympathetic content was held to be the *beautiful* and the antipathetic the *ugly*, the varieties (tragic, comic, sublime, pathetic, etc.) constituted for it the shades and gradations intervening between the beautiful and the ugly.

Critique of the theory of the ugly in art and of the ugly surmounted.

Having enumerated and defined, as well as it could, the chief among these varieties, the Æsthetic of the sympathetic set itself the problem of the place to be assigned to the *ugly in art*. This problem is without meaning for us, who do not recognize any ugliness save the anti-æsthetic or inexpressive, which can never form part of the æsthetic fact, being, on the contrary, its antithesis. But the question for the doctrine which we are here criticizing was to reconcile in some way the false and defective idea of art from which it started, reduced to the representation of the agreeable, with effective art, which occupies a far wider field. Hence the artificial attempt to settle what examples of the ugly (antipathetic) could be admitted in artistic representation, and for what reasons, and in what ways.

The answer was: that the ugly is admissible, only when it can be *overcome*, an unconquerable ugliness, such as the *disgusting* or the *nauseating*, being altogether excluded. Further, that the duty of the ugly, when admitted in art, is to contribute towards heightening the effect of the beautiful (sympathetic), by producing a series of contrasts, from which the pleasurable shall issue more efficacious and pleasure-giving. It is, in fact, a common observation that pleasure is more vividly felt when it has been preceded by abstinence or by suffering. Thus the ugly in art was looked upon as the servant of the beautiful, its stimulant and condiment.

That special theory of hedonistic refinement, which used to be pompously called the *surmounting of the ugly*, falls with the general theory of the sympathetic; and with it the enumeration and the definition of the concepts mentioned above remain completely excluded from Æsthetic. For Æsthetic does not recognize the sympathetic or the antipathetic in their varieties, but only the spiritual activity of the representation.

Pseudo-æsthetic concepts belong to Psychology.

However, the large space which, as we have said, those concepts have hitherto occupied in æsthetic treatises makes opportune a rather more copious explanation of what they are. What

will be their lot? As they are excluded from Æsthetic, in what other part of Philosophy will they be received?

Truly, in none. All those concepts are without philosophical value. They are nothing but a series of classes, which can be bent in the most various ways and multiplied at pleasure, to which it is sought to reduce the infinite complications and shadings of the values and disvalues of life. Of those classes, there are some that have an especially positive significance, like the beautiful, the sublime, the majestic, the solemn, the serious, the weighty, the noble, the elevated; others have a significance especially negative, like the ugly, the horrible, the dreadful, the tremendous, the monstrous, the foolish, the extravagant; in others prevails a mixed significance, as is the case with the comic, the tender, the melancholy, the humorous, the tragi-comic. The complications are infinite, because the individuations are infinite; hence it is not possible to construct the concepts, save in the arbitrary and approximate manner of the natural sciences, whose duty it is to make as good a plan as possible of that reality which they cannot exhaust by enumeration, nor understand and surpass speculatively. And since *Psychology* is the naturalistic discipline, which

undertakes to construct types and plans of the spiritual processes of man (of which, in fact, it is always accentuating in our day the merely empirical and descriptive character), these concepts do not appertain to Æsthetic, nor, in general, to Philosophy. They must simply be handed over to Psychology.

Impossibility of rigoristic definitions of them.

As is the case with all other psychological constructions, so is it with those concepts: no rigorous definitions are possible; and consequently the one cannot be deduced from the other and they cannot be connected in a system, as has, nevertheless, often been attempted, at great waste of time and without result. But it can be claimed as possible to obtain, apart from philosophical definitions recognised as impossible, empirical definitions, universally acceptable as true. Since there does not exist a unique definition of a given fact, but innumerable definitions can be given of it, according to the cases and the objects for which they are made, so it is clear that if there were only one, and that the true one, this would no longer be an empirical, but a rigorous and philosophical definition. Speaking exactly, every time that one of the terms to which we have referred has been employed, or any other of the innumerable series,

a definition of it has at the same time been given, expressed or understood. And each one of these definitions has differed somewhat from the others, in some particular, perhaps of very small importance, such as tacit reference to some individual fact or other, which thus became especially an object of attention and was raised to the position of a general type. So it happens that not one of such definitions satisfies him who hears it, nor does it satisfy even him who constructs it. For, the moment after, this same individual finds himself face to face with a new case, for which he recognizes that his definition is more or less insufficient, ill-adapted, and in need of remodelling. It is necessary, therefore, to leave writers and speakers free to define the sublime or the comic, the tragic or the humoristic, on every occasion, as they please and as may seem suitable to their purpose. And if you insist upon obtaining an empirical definition of universal validity, we can but submit this one:— The sublime (comic, tragic, humoristic, etc.) is *everything* that is or will be so *called* by those who have employed or shall employ this *word.*

What is the sublime? The unexpected affirmation of an ultra-powerful moral force: that

Examples: definitions of the sublime, the comic, and the humoristic.

is one definition. But that other definition is equally good, which also recognizes the sublime, where the force which declares itself is an ultra-powerful, but immoral and destructive will. Both remain vague and assume no precise form, until they are applied to a concrete case, which makes clear what is here meant by *ultra-powerful*, and what by *unexpected*. They are quantitative concepts, but falsely quantitative, since there is no way of measuring them; they are, at bottom, metaphors, emphatic phrases, or logical tautologies. The humorous will be laughter mingled with tears, bitter laughter, the sudden passage from the comic to the tragic, and from the tragic to the comic, the comic romantic, the inverted sublime, war declared against every attempt at insincerity, compassion which is ashamed to lament, the mockery not of the fact, but of the ideal itself; and whatever else may better please, according as it is desired to get a view of the physiognomy of this or that poet, of this or that poem, which is, in its uniqueness, its own definition, and though momentary and circumscribed, yet the sole adequate. The comic has been defined as the displeasure arising from the perception of a deformity immediately followed by a greater pleasure arising from the relaxation

of our psychical forces, which were strained in anticipation of a perception whose importance was foreseen. While listening to a narrative, which, for example, should describe the magnificent and heroic purpose of a definite person, we anticipate in imagination the occurrence of an action both heroic and magnificent, and we prepare ourselves to receive it, by straining our psychic forces. If, however, in a moment, instead of the magnificent and heroic action, which the premises and the tone of the narrative had led us to expect, by an unexpected change there occur a slight, mean, foolish action, unequal to our expectation, we have been deceived, and the recognition of the deceit brings with it an instant of displeasure. But this instant is as it were overcome by the one immediately following, in which we are able to discard our strained attention, to free ourselves from the provision of psychic energy accumulated and henceforth superfluous, to feel ourselves reasonable and relieved of a burden. This is the pleasure of the comic, with its physiological equivalent, laughter. If the unpleasant fact that has occurred should painfully affect our interests, pleasure would not arise, laughter would be at once choked, the psychic energy would be strained and overstrained by

other more serious perceptions. If, on the other hand, such more serious perceptions do not arise, if the whole loss be limited to a slight deception of our foresight, then the supervening feeling of our psychic wealth affords ample compensation for this very slight displeasure.—This, stated in a few words, is one of the most accurate modern definitions of the comic. It boasts of containing, justified or corrected, the manifold attempts to define the comic, from Hellenic antiquity to our own day. It includes Plato's dictum in the *Philebus*, and Aristotle's, which is more explicit. The latter looks upon the comic as an *ugliness without pain*. It contains the theory of Hobbes, who placed it in the feeling of *individual superiority*; of Kant, who saw in it a *relaxation of tension*; and those of other thinkers, for whom it was *the contrast between great and small, between the finite and the infinite*. But on close observation, the analysis and definition above given, although most elaborate and rigorous in appearance, yet enunciates characteristics which are applicable, not only to the comic, but to every spiritual process; such as the succession of painful and agreeable moments and the satisfaction arising from the consciousness of force and of its free development. The differentiation here given

is that of quantitative determinations, to which limits cannot be assigned. They remain vague phrases, attaining to some meaning from their reference to this or that single comic fact. If such definitions be taken too seriously, there happens to them what Jean Paul Richter said of all the definitions of the comic: namely, that their sole merit is *to be themselves comic* and to produce, in reality, the fact, which they vainly try to define logically. And who will ever determine logically the dividing line between the comic and the non-comic, between smiles and laughter, between smiling and gravity; who will cut into clearly divided parts that ever-varying continuity into which life melts?

Relations between those concepts and æsthetic concepts.

The facts, classified as well as possible in the above-quoted psychological concepts, bear no relation to the artistic fact, beyond the generic one, that all of them, in so far as they designate the material of life, can be represented by art; and the other accidental relation, that æsthetic facts also may sometimes enter into the processes described, as in the impression of the sublime that the work of a Titanic artist such as Dante or Shakespeare may produce, and that of the comic produced by the effort of a dauber or of a scribbler.

The process is external to the æsthetic fact in this case also; for the only feeling linked with that is the feeling of æsthetic value and disvalue, of the beautiful and of the ugly. The Dantesque Farinata is æsthetically beautiful, and nothing but beautiful: if, in addition, the force of will of this personage appear sublime, or the expression that Dante gives him, by reason of his great genius, seem sublime by comparison with that of a less energetic poet, all this is not a matter for æsthetic consideration. This consists always and only in adequation to truth; that is, in beauty.

XIII

THE SO-CALLED PHYSICALLY BEAUTIFUL IN NATURE AND ART

Æsthetic activity and physical concepts.

ÆSTHETIC activity is distinct from practical activity, but when it expresses itself is always accompanied by practical activity. Hence its utilitarian or hedonistic side, and the pleasure and pain, which are, as it were, the practical echo of æsthetic values and disvalues, of the beautiful and of the ugly. But this practical side of the æsthetic activity has also, in its turn, a *physical* or *psychophysical* accompaniment, which consists of sounds, tones, movements, combinations of lines and colours, and so on.

Does it *really* possess this side, or does it only seem to possess it, as the result of the construction which we raise in physical science, and of the useful and arbitrary methods, which we have shown to be proper to the empirical and abstract sciences? Our reply cannot be doubtful, that is, it cannot be affirmative as to the first of the two hypotheses.

However, it will be better to leave it at this point in suspense, for it is not at present necessary to prosecute this line of inquiry any further. The mention already made must suffice to prevent our having spoken of the physical element as of something objective and existing, for reasons of simplicity and adhesion to ordinary language, from leading to hasty conclusions as to the concepts and the connexion between spirit and nature.

Expression in the æsthetic sense, and expression in the naturalistic sense.

It is important to make clear that as the existence of the hedonistic side in every spiritual activity has given rise to the confusion between the æsthetic activity and the useful or pleasurable, so the existence, or, better, the possibility of constructing this physical side, has generated the confusion between *æsthetic* expression and expression *in the naturalistic sense*; between a spiritual fact, that is to say, and a mechanical and passive fact (not to say, between a concrete reality and an abstraction or fiction). In common speech, sometimes it is the words of the poet that are called *expressions*, the notes of the musician, or the figures of the painter; sometimes the blush which is wont to accompany the feeling of shame, the pallor resulting from fear, the grinding of the teeth proper to violent anger, the glittering of

the eyes, and certain movements of the muscles of the mouth, which reveal cheerfulness. A certain degree of heat is also said to be the *expression* of fever, as the falling of the barometer is of rain, and even that the height of the rate of exchange *expresses* the discredit of the paper-money of a State, or social discontent the approach of a revolution. One can well imagine what sort of scientific results would be attained by allowing oneself to be governed by linguistic usage and placing in one sheaf facts so widely different. But there is, in fact, an abyss between a man who is the prey of anger with all its natural manifestations, and another man who expresses it æsthetically; between the aspect, the cries, and the contortions of one who is tortured with sorrow at the loss of a dear one, and the words or song with which the same individual portrays his torture at another moment; between the distortion of emotion and the gesture of the actor. Darwin's book on the expression of the feelings in man and animals does not belong to Æsthetic; because there is nothing in common between the science of spiritual expression and a *Semiotic*, whether it be medical, meteorological, political, physiognomic, or chiromantic.

Expression in the naturalistic sense simply

lacks expression in the spiritual sense, that is to say, the characteristic itself of activity and of spirituality, and therefore the bipartition into poles of beauty and of ugliness. It is nothing more than a relation between cause and effect, fixed by the abstract intellect. The complete process of æsthetic production can be symbolized in four steps, which are: *a*, impressions; *b*, expression or spiritual æsthetic synthesis; *c*, hedonistic accompaniment, or pleasure of the beautiful (æsthetic pleasure); *d*, translation of the æsthetic fact into physical phenomena (sounds, tones, movements, combinations of lines and colours, etc.). Anyone can see that the capital point, the only one that is properly speaking æsthetic and truly real, is in that *b*, which is lacking to the mere manifestation or naturalistic construction, metaphorically also called expression.

The expressive process is exhausted when those four steps have been taken. It begins again with new impressions, a new æsthetic synthesis, and relative accompaniments.

Intuitions and memory.

Expressions or representations follow and expel one another. Certainly, this passing away, this disassociation, is not perishing, it is not total elimination: nothing of what is born dies with

that complete death which would be identical with never having been born. Though all things pass away, yet none can die. The representations which we have forgotten, also persist in some way in our spirit, for without them we could not explain acquired habits and capacities. Thus, the strength of life lies in this apparent forgetting: one forgets what has been absorbed and what life has superseded.

But many other things, many other representations, are still efficacious elements in the actual processes of our spirit; and it is incumbent on us not to forget them, or to be capable of recalling them when necessity demands them. The will is always vigilant in this work of preservation, for it aims at preserving (so to say) the greater and more fundamental part of all our riches. Certainly its vigilance is not always sufficient. Memory, we know, leaves or betrays us in various ways. For this very reason, the vigilant will excogitates expedients, which help memory in its weakness, and are its *aids*.

The production of aids to memory.

We have already explained how these aids are possible. Expressions or representations are, at the same time, practical facts, which are also called physical facts, in so far as to the physical

belongs the task of classifying them and reducing them to types. Now it is clear, that if we can succeed in making those facts in some way permanent, it will always be possible (other conditions remaining equal) to reproduce in us, by perceiving it, the already produced expression or intuition.

If that in which the practical concomitant acts, or (to use physical terms) the movements have been isolated and made in some sort permanent, be called the object or physical stimulus, and if it be designated by the letter *e*; then the process of reproduction will take place in the following order: *e*, the physical stimulus; *d-b*, perceptions of physical facts (sounds, tones, mimic, combinations of lines and colours, etc.), which form together the æsthetic synthesis, already produced; *c*, the hedonistic accompaniment, which is also reproduced.

And what are those combinations of words which are called poetry, prose, poems, novels, romances, tragedies or comedies, but *physical stimulants of reproduction* (the *e* stage); what are those combinations of sound which are called operas, symphonies, sonatas; and what those of lines and of colours, which are called pictures, statues, architecture? The spiritual energy of

memory, with the assistance of those physical facts above mentioned, makes possible the preservation and the reproduction of the intuitions produced, often so laboriously, by ourselves and by others. If the physiological organism, and with it memory, become weakened; if the monuments of art be destroyed; then all the æsthetic wealth, the fruit of the labours of many generations, becomes lessened and rapidly disappears.

The physically beautiful.

Monuments of art, which are the stimulants of æsthetic reproduction, are called *beautiful things or the physically beautiful.* This combination of words constitutes a verbal paradox, because the beautiful is not a physical fact; it does not belong to things, but to the activity of man, to spiritual energy. But henceforth it is clear through what wanderings and what abbreviations, physical things and facts, which are simply aids to the reproduction of the beautiful, end by being called, elliptically, beautiful things and physically beautiful. And now that we have made the existence of this ellipse clear, we shall ourselves make use of it without hesitation.

Content and form: another meaning.

The intervention of the physically beautiful serves to explain another meaning of the words *content and form*, as employed by æstheticians.

Some call "content" the internal fact or expression (which is for us already form), and they call "form" the marble, the colours, the rhythm, the sounds (for us form no longer); thus they look upon the physical fact as the form, which may or may not be joined to the content. This serves to explain another aspect of what is called æsthetic ugliness. He who has nothing definite to express may try to hide his internal emptiness with a flood of words, with sounding verse, with deafening polyphony, with painting that dazzles the eye, or by collocating great architectonic masses, which arrest and disturb, although, at bottom, they convey nothing. Ugliness, then, is the arbitrary, the charlatanesque; and, in reality, if the practical will do not intervene in the theoretic function, there may be absence of beauty, but never effective presence of the ugly.

Natural and artificial beauty.

Physical beauty is wont to be divided into *natural* and *artificial* beauty. Thus we reach one of the facts, which has given great labour to thinkers: *the beautiful in nature.* These words often designate simply facts of practical pleasure. He alludes to nothing æsthetic who calls a landscape beautiful where the eye rests upon verdure, where bodily motion is easy, and where the warm sun-ray envelops and caresses the limbs. But

it is nevertheless indubitable, that on other occasions the adjective "beautiful," applied to objects and scenes existing in nature, has a completely æsthetic signification.

It has been observed, that in order to enjoy natural objects æsthetically, we should withdraw them from their external and historical reality, and separate their simple appearance or origin from existence; that if we contemplate a landscape with our head between our legs, in such a way as to remove ourselves from our wonted relations with it, the landscape appears as an ideal spectacle; that nature is beautiful only for him who contemplates her *with the eye of the artist*; that zoologists and botanists do not recognize beautiful animals and flowers; that natural beauty is *discovered* (and examples of discovery are the points of view, pointed out by men of taste and imagination, and to which more or less æsthetic travellers and excursionists afterwards have recourse in pilgrimage, whence a more or less collective *suggestion*); that, without the *aid of the imagination*, no part of nature is beautiful, and that with such aid the same natural object or fact is now expressive, according to the disposition of the soul, now insignificant, now expressive of one definite

thing, now of another, sad or glad, sublime or ridiculous, sweet or laughable; finally, that *natural beauty*, which an artist would not *to some extent correct, does not exist.*

All these observations are most just, and confirm the fact that natural beauty is simply a *stimulus* to æsthetic reproduction, which presupposes previous production. Without preceding æsthetic intuitions of the imagination, nature cannot arouse any at all. As regards natural beauty, man is like the mythical Narcissus at the fountain. They show further that since this stimulus is accidental, it is, for the most part, imperfect or equivocal. Leopardi said that natural beauty is "rare, scattered, and fugitive." Every one refers the natural fact to the expression which is in his mind. One artist is, as it were, carried away by a laughing landscape, another by a rag-shop, another by the pretty face of a young girl, another by the squalid countenance of an old ruffian. Perhaps the first will say that the rag-shop and the ugly face of the old ruffian are *disgusting*; the second, that the laughing landscape and the face of the young girl are *insipid.* They may dispute for ever; but they will never agree, save when they have supplied themselves with a sufficient dose of æsthetic

knowledge, which will enable them to recognize that they are both right. *Artificial* beauty, created by man, is a much more ductile and efficacious aid to reproduction.

Mixed beauty.

In addition to these two classes, æstheticians also sometimes talk in their treatises of a *mixed* beauty. Of what is it a mixture? Just of natural and artificial. Whoso fixes and externalizes, operates with natural materials, which he does not create, but combines and transforms. In this sense, every artificial product is a mixture of nature and artifice; and there would be no occasion to speak of a mixed beauty, as of a special category. But it happens that, in certain cases, combinations already given in nature can be used a great deal more than in others; as, for instance, when we design a beautiful garden and include in our design groups of trees or ponds which are already there. On other occasions externalization is limited by the impossibility of producing certain effects artificially. Thus we may mix the colouring matters, but we cannot create a powerful voice or a personage and an appearance appropriate to this or that personage of a drama. We must therefore seek for them among things already existing, and make use of them when we find them. When, therefore, we adopt a

great number of combinations already existing in nature, such as we should not be able to produce artificially if they did not exist, the result is called *mixed* beauty.

Writings. We must distinguish from artificial beauty those instruments of reproduction called *writings*, such as alphabets, musical notes, hieroglyphics, and all pseudo-languages, from the language of flowers and flags, to the language of patches (so much the vogue in the society of the eighteenth century). Writings are not physical facts which arouse directly impressions answering to æsthetic expressions; they are simple *indications* of what must be done in order to produce such physical facts. A series of graphic signs serves to remind us of the movements which we must execute with our vocal apparatus in order to emit certain definite sounds. If, through practice, we become able to hear the words without opening our mouths and (what is much more difficult) to hear the sounds by running the eye down the page of the music, all this does not alter anything of the nature of the writings, which are altogether different from direct physical beauty. No one calls the book which contains the *Divine Comedy*, or the portfolio which contains *Don Giovanni*, beautiful in the same sense as the

block of marble which contains Michael Angelo's *Moses*, or the piece of coloured wood which contains the *Transfiguration* are metaphorically called beautiful. Both serve for the reproduction of the beautiful, but the former by a far longer and far more indirect route than the latter.

The beautiful as free and not free.

Another division of the beautiful, which is still found in treatises, is that into *free and not free*. By beauties that are not free, are understood those objects which have to serve a double purpose, extra-æsthetic and æsthetic (stimulants of intuitions); and since it appears that the first purpose limits and impedes the second, the beautiful object resulting therefrom has been considered as a beauty that is not free.

Architectural works are especially cited; and precisely for this reason, has architecture often been excluded from the number of the so-called fine arts. A temple must be above all things adapted to the use of a cult; a house must contain all the rooms requisite for commodity of living, and they must be arranged with a view to this commodity; a fortress must be a construction capable of resisting the attacks of certain armies and the blows of certain instruments of war. It is therefore held that the architect's field is limited: he may be able to *embellish* to some extent the

temple, the house, the fortress; but his hands are bound by the *object* of these buildings, and he can only manifest that part of his vision of beauty in their construction which does not impair their extrinsic, but fundamental, objects.

Other examples are taken from what is called art applied to industry. Plates, glasses, knives, guns, and combs can be made beautiful; but it is held that their beauty must not so far exceed as to prevent our eating from the plate, drinking from the glass, cutting with the knife, firing off the gun, or combing one's hair with the comb. The same is said of the art of printing: a book should be beautiful, but not to the extent of its being difficult or impossible to read it.

Critique of the beautiful that is not free.

In respect to all this, we must observe, in the first place, that the external purpose, precisely because it is such, does not of necessity limit or trammel the other purpose of being a stimulus to æsthetic reproduction. Nothing, therefore, can be more erroneous than the thesis that architecture, for example, is by its nature not free and imperfect, since it must also fulfil other practical objects. Beautiful architectural works, however, themselves undertake to deny this by their simple presence.

In the second place, not only are the two objects not necessarily in opposition; but, we

must add, the artist always has the means of preventing this contradiction from taking place. In what way? By taking, as the material of his intuition and æsthetic externalization, precisely the *destination* of the object, which serves a practical end. He will not need to add anything to the object, in order to make it the instrument of æsthetic intuitions: it will be so, if perfectly adapted to its practical purpose. Rustic dwellings and palaces, churches and barracks, swords and ploughs, are beautiful, not in so far as they are embellished and adorned, but in so far as they express the purpose for which they were made. A garment is only beautiful because it is quite suitable to a given person in given conditions. The sword bound to the side of the warrior Rinaldo by the amorous Armida was not beautiful: "so adorned that it seemed a useless ornament, not the warlike instrument of a warrior." It was beautiful, if you will, in the eyes and imagination of the sorceress, who loved her lover in this effeminate way. The æsthetic fact can always accompany the practical fact, because expression is truth.

It cannot, however, be denied that æsthetic contemplation sometimes hinders practical use. For instance, it is a quite common experience to find

certain new things so well adapted to their purpose, and yet so beautiful, that people occasionally feel scruples in maltreating them by using after contemplating them, which amounts to consuming them. It was for this reason that King Frederick William of Prussia evinced repugnance to ordering his magnificent grenadiers, so well suited for war, to endure the strain of battle; but his less æsthetic son, Frederick the Great, obtained from them excellent services.

The stimulants of production.

It might be objected to the explanation of the physically beautiful as a simple adjunct for the reproduction of the internally beautiful, that is to say, of expressions, that the artist creates his expressions by painting or by sculpturing, by writing or by composing, and that therefore the physically beautiful, instead of following, sometimes precedes the æsthetically beautiful. This would be a somewhat superficial mode of understanding the procedure of the artist, who never makes a stroke with his brush without having previously seen it with his imagination; and if he has not yet seen it, he will make the stroke, not in order to externalize his expression (which does not yet exist), but as though to have a rallying point for ulterior meditation and for internal concentration. The physical point on which he

leans is not the physically beautiful, instrument of reproduction, but what may be called a *pedagogic* means, similar to retiring into solitude, or to the many other expedients, frequently very strange, adopted by artists and philosophers, who vary in these according to their various idiosyncrasies. The old æsthetician Baumgarten advised poets to ride on horseback, as a means of inspiration, to drink wine in moderation, and (provided they were chaste) to look at beautiful women.

XIV

MISTAKES ARISING FROM THE CONFUSION BETWEEN PHYSIC AND ÆSTHETIC

It is necessary to mention a series of scientific mistakes which have arisen from the failure to understand the purely external relation between the æsthetic fact or artistic vision, and the physical fact or instrument, which serves as an aid to reproduce it. We must here indicate the proper criticism, which derives from what has already been said.

Critique of æsthetic associationism

That form of associationism which identifies the æsthetic fact with the *association of two* images finds a place among these errors. By what path has it been possible to arrive at such a mistake, against which our æsthetic consciousness, which is a consciousness of perfect unity, never of duality, rebels? Just because the physical and the æsthetic facts have been considered separately, as two distinct images, which enter the spirit, the one drawn forth from

the other, the one first and the other afterwards. A picture is divided into the image of the *picture* and the image of the *meaning* of the picture; a poem, into the image of the *words* and the image of the *meaning* of the words. But this dualism of images is non-existent: the physical fact does not enter the spirit as an image, but causes the reproduction of the image (the only image, which is the æsthetic fact), in so far as it blindly stimulates the psychic organism and produces an impression answering to the æsthetic expression already produced.

The efforts of the associationists (the usurpers of to-day in the field of Æsthetic) to emerge from the difficulty, and to reaffirm in some way the unity which has been destroyed by their principle of associationism, are highly instructive. Some maintain that the image called back again is unconscious; others, leaving unconsciousness alone, hold that, on the contrary, it is vague, vaporous, confused, thus reducing the *force* of the æsthetic fact to the *weakness* of bad memory. But the dilemma is inexorable: either keep association and give up unity, or keep unity and give up association. No third way out of the difficulty exists.

From the failure to analyze so-called natural

Critique of æsthetic physic.

beauty thoroughly, and to recognize that it is simply an incident of æsthetic reproduction, and from having, on the contrary, looked upon it as given in nature, is derived all that portion of treatises upon Æsthetic which is entitled *The Beautiful in Nature or Æsthetic Physic*; sometimes even subdivided, save the mark! into Æsthetic Mineralogy, Botany, and Zoology. We do not wish to deny that such treatises contain many just remarks, and are sometimes themselves works of art, in so far as they represent beautifully the imaginings and fantasies, that is the impressions, of their authors. But we must state that it is scientifically false to ask oneself if the dog be beautiful, and the ornithorhynchus ugly; if the lily be beautiful, and the artichoke ugly. Indeed, the error is here double. On one hand, æsthetic Physic falls back into the equivoke of the theory of artistic and literary classes, by attempting to determine æsthetically the abstractions of our intellect; on the other, fails to recognize, as we said, the true formation of so-called natural beauty; for which the question as to whether some given individual animal, flower, or man be beautiful or ugly, is altogether excluded. What is not produced by the æsthetic spirit, or cannot be referred to it,

is neither beautiful nor ugly. The æsthetic process arises from the ideal relations in which natural objects are arranged.

Critique of the theory of the beauty of the human body.

The double error can be exemplified by the question, upon which whole volumes have been written, as to the *Beauty of the human body.* Here it is necessary, above all things, to urge those who discuss this subject from the abstract toward the concrete, by asking: "What do you mean by the human body, that of the male, of the female, or of the androgyne?" Let us assume that they reply by dividing the inquiry into two distinct inquiries, as to the virile and feminine beauty (there really are writers who seriously discuss whether man or woman is the more beautiful); and let us continue: "Masculine or feminine beauty; but of what race of men—the white, the yellow, or the black, and whatever others there may be, according to the division of races?" Let us assume that they limit themselves to the white race, and let us continue: "What sub-species of the white race?" And when we have restricted them gradually to one section of the white world, that is to say, to the Italian, Tuscan, Siennese, or Porta Camollía section, we will continue: "Very good; but at what age of the human body, and in what condition and state of

development—that of the new-born babe, of the child, of the boy, of the adolescent, of the man of middle age, and so on? and is the man at rest or at work, or is he occupied as is Paul Potter's cow, or the Ganymede of Rembrandt?"

Having thus arrived, by successive reductions, at the individual *omnimode determinatum*, or, better, at the man pointed out with the finger, it will be easy to expose the other error, by recalling what has been said about the natural fact, which is now beautiful, now ugly, according to the point of view, according to what is passing in the mind of the artist. Finally, if the Gulf of Naples have its detractors, and if there be artists who declare it inexpressive, preferring the "gloomy firs," the "clouds and perpetual north winds," of the northern seas; let it be believed, if possible, that such relativity does not exist for the human body, source of the most various suggestions!

Critique of the beauty of geometric figures.

The question of the *beauty of geometrical figures* is connected with æsthetic Physic. But if by geometrical figures be understood the concepts of geometry, the concept of the triangle, the square, the cone, these are neither beautiful nor ugly: they are concepts. If, on the other hand, by such figures be understood bodies which possess definite geometrical forms, these will be

ugly or beautiful, like every natural fact, according to the ideal connexions in which they are placed. Some hold that those geometrical figures are beautiful which point upwards, since they give the suggestion of firmness and of force. It is not denied that such may be the case. But neither must it be denied that those also which give the impression of instability and of being crushed down may possess their beauty, where they represent just the ill-formed and the crushed; and that in these last cases the firmness of the straight line and the lightness of the cone or of the equilateral triangle would, on the contrary, seem elements of ugliness.

Certainly, such questions as to the beauty of nature and the beauty of geometry, like the others analogous of the historically beautiful and of human beauty, seem less absurd in the Æsthetic of the sympathetic, which means, at bottom, by the words "æsthetic beauty" the representation of what is pleasing. But the pretension to determine scientifically what are the sympathetic contents, and what are the irremediably antipathetic, is none the less erroneous, even in the sphere of that doctrine and after the laying down of those premises. One can only answer such questions by repeating with an infinitely long postscript the

Sunt quos of the first ode of the first book of Horace, and the *Havvi chi* of Leopardi's letter to Carlo Pepoli. To each man his beautiful (=sympathetic), as to each man his fair one. Philography is not a science.

Critique of another aspect of the imitation of nature.

The artist sometimes has naturally existing facts before him, in producing the artificial instrument, or physically beautiful. These are called his *models*: bodies, stuffs, flowers, and so on. Let us run over the sketches, the studies, and the notes of the artists: Leonardo noted down in his pocket-book, when he was working on the Last Supper: "Giovannina, fantastic appearance, is at St. Catherine's, at the Hospital; Cristofano di Castiglione is at the Pietà, he has a fine head; Christ, Giovan Conte, is of the suite of Cardinal Mortaro." And so on. From this comes the illusion that the artist *imitates nature*; when it would perhaps be more exact to say that nature imitates the artist, and obeys him. The theory that *art imitates nature* has sometimes been grounded upon and found sustenance in this illusion, as also its variant, more easily to be defended, which makes art the *idealizer of nature.* This last theory presents the process in a disorderly manner, indeed inversely to the true order; for the artist does not proceed from

extrinsic reality, in order to modify it by approaching it to the ideal; but he proceeds from the impression of external nature to expression, that is to say, to his ideal, and from this he passes to the natural fact, which he employs as the instrument of reproduction of the ideal fact.

Critique of the theory of the elementary forms of the beautiful.

Another consequence of the confusion between the æsthetic and the physical fact is the theory of the *elementary forms of the beautiful.* If expression, if the beautiful, be indivisible, the physical fact, in which it externalizes itself, can well be divided and subdivided: for example, a painted surface, into lines and colours, groups and curves of lines, kinds of colours, and so on; a poem, into strophes, verses, feet, syllables; a piece of prose, into chapters, paragraphs, headings, periods, phrases, words, and so on. The parts thus obtained are not æsthetic facts, but smaller physical facts, cut up in an arbitrary manner. If this path were followed, and the confusion persisted in, we should end by concluding that the true forms of the beautiful are *atoms.*

The æsthetic law, several times promulgated, that beauty must have *bulk*, could be invoked against the atoms. It cannot be the imperceptibility of the too small, nor the unapprehensibility of the too large. But a bigness which depends

upon perceptibility, not measurement, derives from a concept widely different from the mathematical. For what is called imperceptible and incomprehensible does not produce an impression, because it is not a real fact, but a concept: the requisite of bulk in the beautiful is thus reduced to the effective reality of the physical fact, which serves for the reproduction of the beautiful.

Critique of the search for the objective conditions of the beautiful.

Continuing the search for the *physical laws* or for the *objective conditions of the beautiful*, it has been asked: To what physical facts does the beautiful correspond? To what the ugly? To what unions of tones, colours, sizes, mathematically determinable? Such inquiries are as if in Political Economy one were to seek for the laws of exchange in the physical nature of the objects exchanged. The constant infecundity of the attempt should have at once given rise to some suspicion as to its vanity. In our times, especially, has the necessity for an *inductive* Æsthetic been often proclaimed, of an Æsthetic starting *from below*, which should proceed like natural science and not hasten its conclusions. Inductive? But Æsthetic has always been both inductive and deductive, like every philosophical science; induction and deduction cannot be separated, nor can they separately avail to characterize a true

science. But the word "inductive" was not here pronounced accidentally and without special intention. It was wished to imply by its use that the æsthetic fact is nothing, at bottom, but a physical fact, which should be studied by applying to it the methods proper to the physical and natural sciences. With such a presupposition and in such a faith did inductive Æsthetic or Æsthetic of the inferior (what pride in this modesty!) begin its labours. It has conscientiously begun by making a collection of *beautiful things*, for example of a great number of envelopes of various shapes and sizes, and has asked which of these give the impression of the beautiful and which of the ugly. As was to be expected, the inductive æstheticians speedily found themselves in a difficulty, for the same objects that appeared ugly in one aspect would appear beautiful in another. A yellow, coarse envelope, which would be extremely ugly for the purpose of enclosing a love-letter, is, however, just what is wanted for a writ served by process on stamped paper. This in its turn would look very bad, or seem at any rate an irony, if enclosed in a square English envelope. Such considerations of simple common sense should have sufficed to convince inductive æstheticians, that the beautiful

has no physical existence, and cause them to remit their vain and ridiculous quest. But no: they have had recourse to an expedient, as to which we would find it difficult to say how far it belongs to natural science. They have sent their envelopes round from one to the other and opened a *referendum*, thus striving to decide by the votes of the majority in what consists the beautiful and the ugly.

We will not waste time over this argument, because we should seem to be turning ourselves into narrators of comic anecdotes rather than expositors of æsthetic science and of its problems. It is an actual fact, that the inductive æstheticians have not yet discovered *one single law.*

Astrology of Æsthetic.

He who dispenses with doctors is prone to abandon himself to charlatans. Thus it has befallen those who have believed in the natural laws of the beautiful. Artists sometimes adopt empirical canons, such as that of the proportions of the human body, or of the golden section, that is to say, of a line divided into two parts in such a manner that the less is to the greater as is the greater to the whole line ($bc : ac = ac : ab$). Such canons easily become their superstitions, and they attribute to such the success of their works. Thus Michael Angelo left as a precept

to his disciple Marco del Pino of Siena that "he should always make a pyramidal serpentine figure multiplied by one, two, three," a precept which did not enable Marco di Siena to emerge from that mediocrity which we can yet observe in his many works, here in Naples. Others extracted from the sayings of Michael Angelo the precept that serpentine undulating lines were the true *lines of beauty.* Whole volumes have been composed on these laws of beauty, on the golden section and on the undulating and serpentine lines. These should in our opinion be looked upon as the *astrology of Æsthetic.*

XV

THE ACTIVITY OF EXTERNALIZATION, TECHNIQUE AND THE THEORY OF THE ARTS

The practical activity of externalization.

THE fact of the production of the physically beautiful implies, as has already been remarked, a vigilant will, which persists in not allowing certain visions, intuitions, or representations, to be lost. Such a will must be able to act with the utmost rapidity, and as it were instinctively, and also be capable of long and laborious deliberations. Thus and only thus does the practical activity enter into relations with the æsthetic, that is to say, in effecting the production of physical objects, which are aids to memory. Here it is not merely a concomitant, but really a distinct moment of the æsthetic activity. We cannot will or not will our æsthetic vision: we can, however, will or not will to externalize it, or better, to preserve and communicate, or not, to others, the externalization produced.

This volitional fact of externalization is pre-

ceded by a complex of various kinds of knowledge. These are known as *techniques*, like all knowledge which precedes the practical activity. Thus we talk of an artistic technique in the same metaphorical and elliptic manner that we talk of the physically beautiful, that is to say (in more precise language), *knowledge employed by the practical activity engaged in producing stimuli to æsthetic reproduction.* In place of employing so lengthy a phrase, we shall here avail ourselves of the vulgar terminology, since we are henceforward aware of its true meaning.

The technique of externalization.

The possibility of this technical knowledge, at the service of artistic reproduction, has caused people to imagine the existence of an æsthetic technique of internal expression, which is tantamount to saying, a *doctrine* of *the means of internal expression*, which is altogether inconceivable. And we know well the reason why it is inconceivable; expression, considered in itself, is primary theoretic activity, and, in so far as it is this, it precedes the practical activity and the intellectual knowledge which illumines the practical activity, and is thus independent alike of the one and of the other. It also helps to illumine the practical activity, but is not illuminated by it. Expression does not

employ *means*, because it has not an *end*; it has intuitions of things, but does not will them, and is thus indivisible into means and end. Thus if it be said, as sometimes is the case, that a certain writer has invented a new technique of fiction or of drama, or that a painter has discovered a new mode of distribution of light, the word is used in a false sense; because the so-called *new technique is really that romance itself, or that new picture* itself. The distribution of light belongs to the vision itself of the picture; as the technique of a dramatist is his dramatic conception itself. On other occasions, the word "technique" is used to designate certain merits or defects in a work which is a failure; and it is said, euphemistically, that the conception is bad, but the technique good, or that the conception is good, and the technique bad.

On the other hand, when the different ways of painting in oils, or of etching, or of sculpturing in alabaster, are discussed, then the word "technique" is in its place; but in such a case the adjective "artistic" is used metaphorically. And if a dramatic technique in the artistic sense be impossible, a theatrical technique is not impossible, that is to say, processes of externalization of certain given æsthetic works.

When, for instance, women were introduced on the stage in Italy in the second half of the sixteenth century, in place of men dressed as women, this was a true and real discovery in theatrical technique; such too was the perfecting in the following century by the impresarios of Venice, of machines for the rapid changing of the scenes.

The theoretic techniques of the individual arts.

The collection of technical knowledge at the service of artists desirous of externalizing their expressions, can be divided into groups, which may be entitled *theories of the arts.* Thus is born a theory of Architecture, comprising mechanical laws, information relating to the weight or to the resistance of the materials of construction or of fortification, manuals relating to the method of mixing chalk or stucco; a theory of Sculpture, containing advice as to the instruments to be used for sculpturing the various sorts of stone, for obtaining a successful fusion of bronze, for working with the chisel, for the exact copying of the model in chalk or plaster, for keeping chalk damp; a theory of Painting, on the various techniques of tempera, of oil-painting, of water-colour, of pastel, on the proportions of the human body, on the laws of perspective; a theory of Oratory, with

precepts as to the method of producing, of exercising and of strengthening the voice, of mimic and gesture; a theory of Music, on the combinations and fusions of tones and sounds; and so on. Such collections of precepts abound in all literatures. And since it soon becomes impossible to say what is useful and what useless to know, books of this sort become very often a sort of encyclopædias or catalogues of desiderata. Vitruvius, in his treatise on Architecture, claims for the architect a knowledge of letters, of drawing, of geometry, of arithmetic, of optic, of history, of natural and moral philosophy, of jurisprudence, of medicine, of astrology, of music, and so on. Everything is worth knowing: learn the art and lay it aside.

It should be evident that such empirical collections are not reducible to a science. They are composed of notions, taken from various sciences and teachings, and their philosophical and scientific principles are to be found in them. To undertake the construction of a scientific theory of the different arts, would be to wish to reduce to the single and homogeneous what is by nature multiple and heterogeneous; to wish to destroy the existence as a collection of what was put together precisely to form a

collection. Were we to give a scientific form to the manuals of the architect, the painter, or the musician, it is clear that nothing would remain in our hands but the general principles of Mechanic, Optic, or Acoustic. Or if the especially artistic observations disseminated through it be extracted and isolated, and a science be made of them, then the sphere of the individual art is deserted and that of Æsthetic entered upon, for Æsthetic is always general Æsthetic, or better, it cannot be divided into general and special. This last case (that is, the attempt to furnish a technique of Æsthetic) is found, when men possessing strong scientific instincts and a natural tendency to philosophy, set themselves to work to produce such theories and technical manuals.

Critique of the æsthetic theories of the individual arts.

But the confusion between Physic and Æsthetic has attained to its highest degree, when æsthetic theories of the different arts are imagined, to answer such questions as: What are the *limits* of each art? What can be represented with colours, and what with sounds? What with simple monochromatic lines, and what with touches of various colours? What with notes, and what with metres and rhymes? What are the limits between the figurative and the

auditional arts, between painting and sculpture, poetry and music?

This, translated into scientific language, is tantamount to asking: What is the connexion between Acoustic and æsthetic expression? What between the latter and Optic?—and the like. Now, if *there is no passage* from the physical fact to the æsthetic, how could there be from the æsthetic to particular groups of æsthetic facts, such as the phenomena of Optic or of Acoustic?

Critique of the classifications of the arts.

The things called *Arts* have no æsthetic limits, because, in order to have them, they would need to have also æsthetic existence; and we have demonstrated the altogether empirical genesis of those divisions. Consequently, any attempt at an æsthetic classification of the arts is absurd. If they be without limits, they are not exactly determinable, and consequently cannot be philosophically classified. All the books dealing with classifications and systems of the arts could be burned without any loss whatever. (We say this with the utmost respect to the writers who have expended their labours upon them.)

The impossibility of such classifications finds, as it were, its proof in the strange methods to which

recourse has been had to carry them out. The first and most common classification is that into arts of *hearing*, *sight*, and *imagination*; as if eyes, ears, and imagination were on the same level, and could be deduced from the same logical variable, as foundation of the division. Others have proposed the division into arts of *space and time*, and arts of *rest* and *motion*; as if the concepts of space, time, rest, and motion could determine special æsthetic forms, or have anything in common with art as such. Finally, others have amused themselves by dividing them into *classic and romantic*, or into *oriental*, *classic*, *and romantic*, thereby conferring the value of scientific concepts on simple historical denominations, or adopting those pretended partitions of expressive forms, already criticized above; or by talking of arts *that can only be seen from one side*, like painting, and of arts *that can be seen from all sides*, like sculpture—and similar extravagances, which exist neither in heaven nor on the earth.

The theory of the limits of the arts was, perhaps, at the time when it was put forward, a beneficial critical reaction against those who believed in the possibility of the flowing of one expression into another, as of the *Iliad* or of *Paradise Lost* into a series of paintings, and

thus held a poem to be of greater or lesser value, according as it could or could not be translated into pictures by a painter. But if the rebellion were reasonable and victorious, this does not mean that the arguments adopted and the theories made as required were sound.

Critique of the theory of the union of the arts.

Another theory which is a corollary to that of the limits of the arts, falls with them; that of the *union of the arts*. Granted different arts, distinct and limited, the questions were asked: Which is the most powerful? Do we not obtain more powerful effects by uniting several? We know nothing of this: we know only, in each individual case, that certain given artistic intuitions have need of definite physical means for their reproduction, and that other artistic intuitions have need of other physical means. We can obtain the effect of certain dramas by simply reading them; others need declamation and scenic display: some artistic intuitions, for their full extrinsication, need words, song, musical instruments, colours, statuary, architecture, actors; while others are beautiful and complete in a single delicate sweep of the pen, or with a few strokes of the pencil. But it is false to suppose that declamation and scenic effects, and all the other things we have mentioned together, are

more powerful than simply reading, or than the simple stroke with the pen and with the pencil; because each of these facts or groups of facts has, so to say, a different object, and the power of the different means employed cannot be compared when the objects are different.

Connexion of the activity of externalization with utility and morality.

Finally, it is only from the point of view of a clear and rigorous distinction between the true and proper æsthetic activity, and the practical activity of externalization, that we can solve the involved and confused questions as to the relations between *art and utility*, and *art and morality*.

That art as art is independent alike of utility and of morality, as also of every volitional form, we have above demonstrated. Without this independence, it would not be possible to speak of an intrinsic value of art, nor indeed to conceive an æsthetic science, which demands the autonomy of the æsthetic fact as a necessity of its existence.

But it would be erroneous to maintain that this independence of the vision or intuition or internal expression of the artist should be at once extended to the practical activity of externalization and of communication, which may or may not follow the æsthetic fact. If art be understood as the externalization of art, then utility and morality have a perfect right to deal

with it; that is to say, the right one possesses to deal with one's own household.

We do not, as a matter of fact, externalize and fix all of the many expressions and intuitions which we form in our mind; we do not declare our every thought in a loud voice, or write down, or print, or draw, or colour, or expose it to the public gaze. *We select* from the crowd of intuitions which are formed or at least sketched within us; and the selection is governed by selection of the economic conditions of life and of its moral direction. Therefore, when we have formed an intuition, it remains to decide whether or no we should communicate it to others, and to whom, and when, and how; all of which considerations fall equally under the utilitarian and ethical criterion.

Thus we find the concepts of *selection*, of the *interesting*, of *morality*, of an *educational end*, of *popularity*, etc., to some extent justified, although these can in no wise be justified as imposed upon art as art, and we have ourselves denounced them in pure Æsthetic. Error always contains an element of truth. He who formulated those erroneous æsthetic propositions had his eye on practical facts, which attach themselves externally to the æsthetic fact in economic and moral life.

By all means, be partisans of a yet greater liberty in the vulgarization of the means of æsthetic reproduction; we are of the same opinion, and let us leave the proposals for legislative measures, and for actions to be instigated against immoral art, to hypocrites, to the ingenuous, and to idlers. But the proclamation of this liberty, and the fixation of its limits, how wide soever they be, is always the affair of morality. And it would in any case be out of place to invoke that highest principle, that *fundamentum Æsthetices*, which is the independence of art, in order to deduce from it the guiltlessness of the artist, who, in the externalization of his imaginings, should calculate upon the unhealthy tastes of his readers; or that licenses should be granted to the hawkers who sell obscene statuettes in the streets. This last case is the affair of the police; the first must be brought before the tribunal of the moral conscience. The æsthetic judgment on the work of art has nothing to do with the morality of the artist, in so far as he is a practical man, nor with the precautions to be taken that art may not be employed for evil purposes alien to its essence, which is pure theoretic contemplation.

XVI

TASTE AND THE REPRODUCTION OF ART

Æsthetic judgment. Its identity with æsthetic reproduction.

WHEN the entire æsthetic and externalizing process has been completed, when a beautiful expression has been produced and fixed in a definite physical material, what is meant by *judging it*? *To reproduce it in oneself*, answer the critics of art, almost with one voice. Very good. Let us try thoroughly to understand this fact, and with that object in view, let us represent it schematically.

The individual A is seeking the expression of an impression, which he feels or has a presentiment of, but has not yet expressed. Behold him trying various words and phrases, which may give the sought-for expression, which must exist, but which he does not know. He tries the combination *m*, but rejects it as unsuitable, inexpressive, incomplete, ugly: he tries the combination *n*, with a like result. *He does not see anything, or he does not see clearly.* The

expression still flies from him. After other vain attempts, during which he sometimes approaches, sometimes leaves the sign that offers itself, all of a sudden (almost as though formed spontaneously of itself) he creates the sought-for expression, and *lux facta est.* He enjoys for an instant æsthetic pleasure or the pleasure of the beautiful. The ugly, with its correlative displeasure, was the æsthetic activity, which had not succeeded in conquering the obstacle; the beautiful is the expressive activity, which now displays itself triumphant.

We have taken this example from the domain of speech, as being nearer and more accessible, and because we all talk, though we do not all draw or paint. Now if another individual, whom we shall term B, desire to judge this expression and decide whether it be beautiful or ugly, he *must of necessity place himself at A's point of view,* and go through the whole process again, with the help of the physical sign, supplied to him by A. If A has seen clearly, then B (who has placed himself at A's point of view) will also see clearly and will find this expression beautiful. If A has not seen clearly, then B also will not see clearly, and will find the expression more or less ugly, *just as A did.*

It may be observed that we have not taken

Impossibility of divergences.

into consideration two other cases: that of A having a clear and B an obscure vision; and that of A having an obscure and B a clear vision. Philosophically speaking, these two cases are *impossible*.

Spiritual activity, precisely because it is activity, is not a caprice, but a spiritual necessity; and it cannot solve a definite æsthetic problem, save in one way, which is the right way. Doubtless certain facts may be adduced, which appear to contradict this deduction. Thus works which seem beautiful to artists, are judged to be ugly by the critics; while works with which the artists were displeased and judged imperfect or failures, are held to be beautiful and perfect by the critics. But this does not mean anything, save that one of the two is wrong: either the critics or the artists, or in one case the artist and in another the critic. In fact, the producer of an expression does not always fully realize what has happened in his soul. Haste, vanity, want of reflexion, theoretic prejudices, make people say, and sometimes others almost believe, that works of ours are beautiful, which, if we were truly to turn inwards upon ourselves, we should see ugly, as they really are. Thus poor Don Quixote, when he

had mended his helmet as well as he could with cardboard—the helmet that had showed itself to possess but the feeblest force of resistance at the first encounter,—took good care not to test it again with a well-delivered sword-thrust, but simply declared and maintained it to be (says the author) *por celada finisima de encaxe.* And in other cases, the same reasons, or opposite but analogous ones, trouble the consciousness of the artist, and cause him to disapprove of what he has successfully produced, or to strive to undo and do again worse, what he has done well, in his artistic spontaneity. An example of this is the *Gerusalemme conquistata.* In the same way, haste, laziness, want of reflexion, theoretic prejudices, personal sympathies, or animosities, and other motives of a similar sort, sometimes cause the critics to proclaim beautiful what is ugly, and ugly what is beautiful. Were they to eliminate such disturbing elements, they would feel the work of art as it really is, and would not leave to posterity, that more diligent and more dispassionate judge, to award the palm, or to do that justice, which they have refused.

Identity of taste and genius.

It is clear from the preceding theorem, that the judicial activity, which criticizes and recognizes the beautiful, is identical with that

which produces it. The only difference lies in the diversity of circumstances, since in the one case it is a question of æsthetic production, in the other of reproduction. The judicial activity is called *taste*; the productive activity is called *genius*: genius and taste are therefore substantially *identical.*

The common remark, that the critic should possess some of the genius of the artist and that the artist should possess taste, reveals a glimpse of this identity; or that there exists an active (productive) taste and a passive (reproductive) taste. But a denial of this is contained in other equally common remarks, as when people speak of taste without genius, or of genius without taste. These last observations are meaningless, unless they be taken as alluding to quantitative differences. In this case, those would be called geniuses without taste who produce works of art, inspired in their culminating parts and neglected and defective in their secondary parts, and those, men of taste without genius, who succeed in obtaining certain isolated or secondary effects, but do not possess the power necessary for a vast artistic synthesis. Analogous explanations can easily be given of other similar propositions. But to posit a substantial difference between

genius and taste, between artistic production and reproduction, would render communication and judgment alike inconceivable. How could we judge what remained extraneous to us? How could that which is produced by a given activity be judged by a different activity? The critic will be a small genius, the artist a great genius; the one will have the strength of ten, the other of a hundred; the former, in order to raise himself to the altitude of the latter, will have need of his assistance; but the nature of both must be the same. In order to judge Dante, we must raise ourselves to his level: let it be well understood that empirically we are not Dante, nor Dante we; but in that moment of judgment and contemplation, our spirit is one with that of the poet, and in that moment we and he are one single thing. In this identity alone resides the possibility that our little souls can unite with the great souls, and become great with them, in the universality of the spirit.

Analogy with the other activities.

Let us remark in passing that what has been said of the æsthetic *judgment* holds good equally for every other activity and for every other judgment; and that scientific, economic, and ethical criticism is effected in a like manner. To limit ourselves to this last, it is only if we place ourselves

ideally in the same conditions in which he who took a given resolution found himself, that we can form a judgment as to whether his resolution were moral or immoral. An action would otherwise remain incomprehensible, and therefore impossible to judge. A homicide may be a rascal or a hero: if this be, within limits, indifferent as regards the safety of society, which condemns both to the same punishment, it is not indifferent to him who wishes to distinguish and to judge from the moral point of view, and we cannot dispense with studying again the individual psychology of the homicide, in order to determine the true nature of his deed, not merely in its judicial, but also in its moral aspect. In Ethic, a moral taste or tact is sometimes referred to, which answers to what is generally called moral conscience, that is to say, to the activity itself of good-will.

Critique of absolutism (intellectualism) and of æsthetic relativism.

The explanation above given of æsthetic judgment or reproduction at once affirms and denies the position of the absolutists and relativists, of those, that is to say, who affirm and of those who deny the existence of an absolute taste.

The absolutists, who affirm that they can judge of the beautiful, are right; but the theory on which they found their affirmation is not maintainable. They conceive of the beautiful,

that is, of æsthetic value, as of something placed outside the æsthetic activity; as if it were a model or a concept which an artist realizes in his work, and of which the critic avails himself afterwards in order to judge the work itself. Concepts and models alike have no existence in art, for by proclaiming that every art can be judged only in itself, and has its own model in itself, they have attained to the denial of the existence of objective models of beauty, whether they be intellectual concepts, or ideas suspended in the metaphysical sky.

In proclaiming this, the adversaries, the relativists, are perfectly right, and accomplish a progress. However, the initial rationality of their thesis becomes in its turn a false theory. Repeating the old adage that there is no accounting for tastes, they believe that æsthetic expression is of the same nature as the pleasant and the unpleasant, which every one feels in his own way, and as to which there is no disputing. But we know that the pleasant and the unpleasant are utilitarian and practical facts. Thus the relativists deny the peculiarity of the æsthetic fact, again confounding expression with impression, the theoretic with the practical.

The true solution lies in rejecting alike

relativism or psychologism, and false absolutism; and in recognizing that the criterion of taste is absolute, but absolute in a different way from that of the intellect, which is developed by reason. The criterion of taste is absolute, with the intuitive absoluteness of the imagination. Thus every act of expressive activity, which is so really, will be recognized as beautiful, and every fact in which expressive activity and passivity are found engaged with one another in an unfinished struggle, will be recognized as ugly.

Critique of relative relativism.

There lies, between absolutists and relativists, a third class, which may be called that of the relative relativists. These affirm the existence of absolute values in other fields, such as Logic and Ethic, but deny their existence in the field of Æsthetic. To them it appears natural and justifiable to dispute about science and morality; because science rests on the universal, common to all men, and morality on duty, which is also a law of human nature; but how, they say, can one dispute about art, which rests on imagination? Not only, however, is the imaginative activity universal and belongs to human nature, like the logical concept and practical duty; but we must oppose a capital objection to this intermediary thesis. If the absolute nature of the imagination

were denied, we should be obliged to deny also that of intellectual or conceptual truth, and, implicitly, of morality. Does not morality presuppose logical distinctions? How could these be known, otherwise than by expressions and words, that is to say, in imaginative form? If the absoluteness of the imagination were removed, spiritual life would tremble to its base. One individual would no longer understand another, nor indeed his own self of a moment before, which, when considered a moment after, is already another individual.

Objection founded on the variation of the stimulus and on the psychic disposition.

Nevertheless, variety of judgments is an indisputable fact. Men are at variance in their logical, ethical, and economical appreciations; and they are equally, or even more at variance in their æsthetic appreciations. If certain reasons detailed by us, above, such as haste, prejudices, passions, etc., may be held to lessen the importance of this disagreement, they do not thereby annul it. We have been cautious, when speaking of the stimuli of reproduction, for we said that reproduction takes place, *if all the other conditions remain equal.* Do they remain equal? Does the hypothesis correspond to reality?

It would appear not. In order to reproduce several times an impression by employing a

suitable physical stimulus, it is necessary that this stimulus be not changed, and that the organism remain in the same psychical conditions as those in which was experienced the impression that it is desired to reproduce. Now it is a fact, that the physical stimulus is continually changing, and in like manner the psychological conditions.

Oil paintings grow dark, frescoes pale, statues lose noses, hands, and legs, architecture becomes totally or partially a ruin, the tradition of the execution of a piece of music is lost, the text of a poem is corrupted by bad copyists or bad printing. These are obvious instances of the changes which daily occur in objects or physical stimuli. As regards psychological conditions, we will not dwell upon the cases of deafness or blindness, that is to say, upon the loss of entire orders of psychical impressions; these cases are secondary and of less importance compared with the fundamental, daily, inevitable, and perpetual changes of the society around us, and of the internal conditions of our individual life. The phonic manifestations, that is, the words and verses of the Dantesque *Commedia*, must produce a very different impression on a citizen engaged in the politics of the third Rome, to that experienced by

a well-informed and intimate contemporary of the poet. The Madonna of Cimabue is still in the Church of Santa Maria Novella; but does she speak to the visitor of to-day as she spoke to the Florentines of the thirteenth century? Even though she were not also darkened by time, would not the impression be altogether different? And finally, how can a poem composed in youth make the same impression on the same individual poet when he re-reads it in his old age, with his psychic dispositions altogether changed?

Critique of the division of signs into natural and conventional.

It is true, that certain æstheticians have attempted a distinction between stimuli and stimuli, between *natural and conventional* signs. They would grant to the former a constant effect on all; to the latter, only on a limited circle. In their belief, signs employed in painting are natural, while the words of poetry are conventional. But the difference between the one and the other is only of degree. It has often been affirmed that painting is a language which all understand, while with poetry it is otherwise. Here, for example, Leonardo placed one of the prerogatives of his art, "which hath not need of interpreters of different languages as have letters," and in it man and brute find satisfaction. He relates the anecdote of that portrait of the father of a family,

"which the little grandchildren were wont to caress while they were still in swaddling-clothes, and the dogs and cats of the house in like manner." But other anecdotes, such as those of the savages who took the portrait of a soldier for a boat, or considered the portrait of a man on horseback as furnished with only one leg, are apt to shake one's faith in the understanding of painting by sucklings, dogs, and cats. Fortunately, no arduous researches are necessary to convince oneself that pictures, poetry, and every work of art, produce no effects save on souls prepared to receive them. Natural signs do not exist; because they are all conventional in a like manner, or, to speak with greater exactitude, all are *historically conditioned.*

The surmounting of variety.

This being so, how are we to succeed in causing the expression to be reproduced by means of the physical object? How obtain the same effect, when the conditions are no longer the same? Would it not, rather, seem necessary to conclude that expressions cannot be reproduced, despite the physical instruments made by man for the purpose, and that what is called reproduction consists in ever new expressions? Such would indeed be the conclusion, if the variety of physical and psychic conditions were intrinsically

unsurmountable. But since the insuperability has none of the characteristics of necessity, we must, on the contrary, conclude: that the reproduction always occurs, when we can replace ourselves in the conditions in which the stimulus (physical beauty) was produced.

Not only can we replace ourselves in these conditions, as an abstract possibility, but as a matter of fact we do so continually. Individual life, which is communion with ourselves (with our past), and social life, which is communion with our like, would not otherwise be possible.

Restorations and historical interpretation.

As regards the physical object, paleographers and philologists, who *restore* to texts their original physiognomy, *restorers* of pictures and of statues, and similar categories of workers, exert themselves to preserve or to give back to the physical object all its primitive energy. These efforts certainly do not always succeed, or are not completely successful, for never, or hardly ever, is it possible to obtain a restoration complete in its smallest details. But the unsurmountable is only accidentally present, and cannot cause us to fail to recognize the favourable results which are nevertheless obtained.

Historical interpretation likewise labours to

reintegrate in us historical conditions which have been altered in the course of history. It revives the dead, completes the fragmentary, and affords us the opportunity of seeing a work of art (a physical object) as its author saw it, at the moment of production.

A condition of this historical labour is tradition, with the help of which it is possible to collect the scattered rays and cause them to converge on one centre. With the help of memory, we surround the physical stimulus with all the facts among which it arose; and thus we make it possible for it to react upon us, as it acted upon him who produced it.

When the tradition is broken, interpretation is arrested; in this case, the products of the past remain *silent* for us. Thus the expressions contained in the Etruscan or Messapian inscriptions are unattainable; thus we still hear discussions among ethnographers as to certain products of the art of savages, whether they be pictures or writings; thus archæologists and prehistorians are not always able to establish with certainty, whether the figures found on the ceramic of a certain region, and on other instruments employed, be of a religious or of a profane nature. But the arrest of interpretation, as that of restoration, is

never a definitely unsurmountable barrier; and the daily discoveries of historical sources and of new methods of better exploiting antiquity, which we may hope to see ever improving, link up broken tradition.

We do not wish to deny that erroneous historical interpretation produces at times what we may term *palimpsests*, new expressions imposed upon the antique, artistic imaginings instead of historical reproductions. The so-called fascination of the past depends in part upon these expressions of ours, which we weave into historical expressions. Thus in hellenic plastic art has been discovered the calm and serene intuition of life of those peoples, who feel, nevertheless, so poignantly, the universality of sorrow; thus has recently been discerned on the faces of the Byzantine saints "the terror of the millennium," a terror which is an equivoke, or an artificial legend invented by modern scholars. But *historical criticism* tends precisely to circumscribe *vain imaginings* and to establish with exactitude the point of view from which we must look.

Thus we live in communication with other men of the present and of the past; and we must not conclude, because sometimes, and indeed often, we find ourselves face to face with the unknown

or the badly known, that when we believe we are engaged in a dialogue, we are always speaking a monologue; nor that we are unable even to repeat the monologue which, in the past, we held with ourselves.

XVII

THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE AND ART

Historical criticism in literature and art. Its importance.

THIS brief exposition of the method by which is obtained the reintegration of the original conditions in which the work of art was produced, and by which reproduction and judgment are made possible, shows how important is the function fulfilled by historical research concerning artistic and literary works; that is to say, by what is usually called *historical criticism*, or method, in literature and art.

Without tradition and historical criticism, the enjoyment of all or nearly all works of art produced by humanity, would be irrevocably lost: we should be little more than animals, immersed in the present alone, or in the most recent past. Only fools despise and laugh at him who reconstitutes an authentic text, explains the sense of words and customs, investigates the conditions in which an artist lived, and accomplishes all those labours which revive the qualities and the original colouring of works of art.

Sometimes the depreciatory or negative judgment refers to the presumed or proved uselessness of many researches, made to recover the correct meaning of artistic works. But, it must be observed, in the first place, that historical research does not only fulfil the task of helping to reproduce and judge artistic works: the biography of a writer or of an artist, for example, and the study of the costume of a period, also possess their own interest, foreign to the history of art, but not foreign to other forms of history. If allusion be made to those researches which do not appear to have interest of any kind, nor to fulfil any purpose, it must be replied that the historical student must often reconcile himself to the useful, but little glorious, office of a cataloguer of facts. These facts remain for the time being formless, incoherent, and insignificant, but they are preserves, or mines, for the historian of the future and for whomsoever may afterwards want them for any purpose. In the same way, books which nobody asks for are placed on the shelves and are noted in the catalogues, because they may be asked for at some time or other. Certainly, in the same way that an intelligent librarian gives the preference to the acquisition and to the cataloguing of those books which he foresees may be of more or better

service, so do intelligent students possess the instinct as to what is or may more probably be useful from among the mass of facts which they are investigating. Others, on the other hand, less well-endowed, less intelligent, or more hasty in producing, accumulate useless selections, rejections and erasures, and lose themselves in refinements and gossipy discussions. But this appertains to the economy of research, and is not our affair. At the most, it is the affair of the master who selects the subjects, of the publisher who pays for the printing, and of the critic who is called upon to praise or to blame the students for their researches.

On the other hand, it is evident, that historical research, directed to illuminate a work of art by placing us in a position to judge it, does not alone suffice to bring it to birth in our spirit: taste, and an imagination trained and awakened, are likewise presupposed. The greatest historical erudition may accompany a taste in part gross or defective, a lumbering imagination, or, as it is generally phrased, a cold, hard heart, closed to art. Which is the lesser evil?—great erudition and defective taste, or natural good taste and great ignorance? The question has often been asked, and perhaps it will be best to deny its

possibility, because one cannot tell which of two evils is the less, or what exactly that means. The merely learned man never succeeds in entering into communication with the great spirits, and keeps wandering for ever about the outer courts, the staircases, and the antechambers of their palaces; but the gifted ignoramus either passes by masterpieces which are to him inaccessible, or instead of understanding the works of art, as they really are, he invents others, with his imagination. Now, the labour of the former may at least serve to enlighten others; but the ingenuity of the latter remains altogether sterile. How, then, can we fail to prefer the conscientious learned man to the inconclusive man of talent, who is not really talented, if he resign himself, and in so far as he resigns himself, to come to no conclusion?

Literary and artistic history. Its distinction from historical criticism and from æsthetic judgment.

It is necessary to distinguish accurately *the history of art and literature* from those historical labours which make use of works of art, but for extraneous purposes (such as biography, civil, religious, and political history, etc.), and also from historical erudition, whose object is preparation for the æsthetic synthesis of reproduction.

The difference between the first of these is obvious. The history of art and literature has

the works of art themselves for principal subject; the other branches of study call upon and interrogate works of art, but only as witnesses, from which to discover the truth of facts which are not æsthetic. The second difference to which we have referred may seem less profound. However, it is very great. Erudition devoted to rendering clear again the understanding of works of art, aims simply at making appear a certain internal fact, an æsthetic reproduction. Artistic and literary history, on the other hand, does not appear until such reproduction has been obtained. It demands, therefore, further labour. Like all other history, its object is to record precisely such facts as have really taken place, that is, artistic and literary facts. A man who, after having acquired the requisite historical erudition, reproduces in himself and tastes a work of art, may remain simply a man of taste, or express at the most his own feeling, with an exclamation of beautiful or ugly. This does not suffice for the making of a historian of literature and art. There is further need that the simple act of reproduction be followed in him by a second internal operation. What is this new operation? It is, in its turn, an expression: the expression of the reproduction; the historical

description, exposition, or representation. There is this difference, then, between the man of taste and the historian: the first merely reproduces in his spirit the work of art; the second, after having reproduced it, represents it historically, thus applying to it those categories by which, as we know, history is differentiated from pure art. Artistic and literary history is, therefore, *a historical work of art founded upon one or more works of art.*

The denomination of artistic or literary critic is used in various senses: sometimes it is applied to the student who devotes his services to literature; sometimes to the historian who reveals the works of art of the past in their reality; more often to both. By critic is sometimes understood, in a more restricted sense, he who judges and describes contemporary literary works; and by historian, he who is occupied with less recent works. These are but linguistic usages and empirical distinctions, which may be neglected; because the true difference lies *between the learned man, the man of taste, and the historian of art.* These words designate, as it were, three successive stages of work, of which each is relatively independent of the one that follows, but not of that which precedes.

As we have seen, a man may be simply learned, yet possess little capacity for understanding works of art; he may indeed be both learned and possess taste, yet be unable to write a page of artistic and literary history. But the true and complete historian, while containing in himself, as necessary pre-requisites, both the learned man and the man of taste, must add to their qualities the gift of historical comprehension and representation.

The method of artistic and literary history.

The method of artistic and literary history presents problems and difficulties, some common to all historical method, others peculiar to it, because they derive from the concept of art itself.

Critique of the problem of the origin of art.

History is wont to be divided into the history of man, the history of nature, and the mixed history of both the preceding. Without examining here the question of the solidity of this division, it is clear that artistic and literary history belongs in any case to the first, since it concerns a spiritual activity, that is to say, an activity proper to man. And since this activity is its subject, the absurdity of propounding the historical *problem of the origin of art* becomes at once evident. We should note that by this formula many different things have in turn been included on many different

occasions. *Origin* has often meant *nature* or *disposition* of the artistic fact, and here was a real scientific or philosophic problem, the very problem, in fact, which our treatise has tried to solve. At other times, by origin has been understood the ideal genesis, the search for the reason of art, the deduction of the artistic fact from a first principle containing in itself both spirit and nature. This is also a philosophical problem, and it is complementary to the preceding, indeed it coincides with it, though it has sometimes been strangely interpreted and solved by means of an arbitrary and semi-fantastic metaphysic. But when it has been sought to discover further exactly in what way the artistic function was *historically formed*, this has resulted in the absurdity to which we have referred. If expression be the first form of consciousness, how can the historical origin be sought of what is *presupposed* not to be a product of nature and of human history? How can we find the historical genesis of that which is a category, by means of which every historical genesis and fact are understood? The absurdity has arisen from the comparison with human institutions, which have, in fact, been formed in the course of history, and which have disappeared or may

disappear in its course. There exists between the æsthetic fact and a human institution (such as monogamic marriage or the fief) a difference to some extent comparable with that between simple and compound bodies in chemistry. It is impossible to indicate the formation of the former, otherwise they would not be simple, and if this be discovered, they cease to be simple and become compound.

The problem of the origin of art, historically understood, is only justified when it is proposed to seek, not for the formation of the function, but where and when art has appeared for the first time (appeared, that is to say, in a striking manner), at what point or in what region of the globe, and at what point or epoch of its history; when, that is to say, not the origin of art, but its most antique or primitive history, is the object of research. This problem forms one with that of the appearance of human civilization on the earth. Data for its solution are certainly wanting, but there yet remains the abstract possibility, and certainly attempts and hypotheses for its solution abound.

History and the criterion of progress.

Every form of human history has the concept of *progress* for foundation. But by progress must not be understood the imaginary and meta-

physical *law of progress*, which should lead the generations of man with irresistible force to some unknown destiny, according to a providential plan which we can logically divine and understand. A supposed law of this sort is the negation of history itself, of that accidentality, that empiricity, that contingency, which distinguish the concrete fact from the abstraction. And for the same reason, progress has nothing to do with the so-called *law of evolution.* If evolution mean the concrete fact of reality which evolves (that is, which is reality), it is not a law. If, on the other hand, it be a law, it becomes confounded with the law of progress in the sense just described. The progress of which we speak here, is nothing but *the concept of human activity itself*, which, working upon the material supplied to it by nature, conquers obstacles and bends nature to its own ends.

Such conception of progress, that is to say, of human activity applied to a given material, is the *point of view* of the historian of humanity. No one but a mere collector of stray facts, a simple seeker, or an incoherent chronicler, can put together the smallest narrative of human deeds, unless he have a definite point of view, that is to say, an intimate personal conviction regarding

the conception of the facts which he has undertaken to relate. The historical work of art cannot be achieved among the confused and discordant mass of crude facts, save by means of this point of view, which makes it possible to carve a definite figure from that rough and incoherent mass. The historian of a practical action should know what is economy and what morality; the historian of mathematics, what are mathematics; the historian of botany, what is botany; the historian of philosophy, what is philosophy. But if he do not really know these things, he must at least have the illusion of knowing them; otherwise he will never be able to delude himself that he is writing history.

We cannot delay here to demonstrate the necessity and the inevitability of this subjective criterion in every narrative of human affairs. We will merely say that this criterion is compatible with the utmost objectivity, impartiality, and scrupulosity in dealing with data, and indeed forms a constitutive element of such subjective criterion. It suffices to read any book of history to discover at once the point of view of the author, if he be a historian worthy of the name and know his own business. There exist liberal and reactionary, rationalist and catholic historians, who deal with

political or social history; for the history of philosophy there are metaphysical, empirical, sceptical, idealist, and spiritualist historians. Absolutely historical historians do not and cannot exist. Can it be said that Thucydides and Polybius, Livy and Tacitus, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, Giannone and Voltaire, were without moral and political views; and, in our time, Guizot or Thiers, Macaulay or Balbo, Ranke or Mommsen? And in the history of philosophy, from Hegel, who was the first to raise it to a great elevation, to Ritter, Zeller, Cousin, Lewes, and our Spaventa, was there one who did not possess his conception of progress and criterion of judgment? Is there one single work of any value in the history of Æsthetic, which has not been written from this or that point of view, with this or that bias (Hegelian or Herbartian), from a sensualist or from an eclectic point of view, and so on? If the historian is to escape from the inevitable necessity of taking a side, he must become a political and scientific eunuch; and history is not the business of eunuchs. They would at most be of use in compiling those great tomes of not useless erudition, *elumbis atque fracta*, which are called, not without reason, monkish.

If, then, the concept of progress, the point of view, the criterion, be inevitable, the best to be done is not to try and escape from them, but to obtain the best possible. Everyone strives for this end, when he forms his own convictions, seriously and laboriously. Historians who profess to wish to interrogate the facts, without adding anything of their own to them, are not to be believed. This, at the most, is the result of ingenuousness and illusion on their part: they will always add what they have of personal, if they be truly historians, though it be without knowing it, or they will believe that they have escaped doing so, only because they have referred to it by innuendo, which is the most insinuating and penetrative of methods.

Non-existence of a unique line of progress in artistic and literary history.

Artistic and literary history cannot dispense with the criterion of progress any more easily than other history. We cannot show what a given work of art is, save by proceeding from a conception of art, in order to fix the artistic problem which the author of such work of art had to solve, and by determining whether or no he have solved it, or by how much and in what way he has failed to do so. But it is important to note that the criterion of progress assumes a different form in artistic and literary history to

that which it assumes (or is believed to assume) in the history of science.

The whole history of knowledge can be represented by one single line of progress and regress. Science is the universal, and its problems are arranged in one single vast system, or complex problem. All thinkers weary themselves over the same problem as to the nature of reality and of knowledge: contemplative Indians and Greek philosophers, Christians and Mohammedans, bare heads and heads with turbans, wigged heads and heads with the black berretta (as Heine said); and future generations will weary themselves with it, as ours has done. It would take too long to inquire here if this be true or not of science. But it is certainly not true of art; art is intuition, and intuition is individuality, and individuality is never repeated. To conceive of the history of the artistic production of the human race as developed along a single line of progress and regress, would therefore be altogether erroneous.

At the most, and working to some extent with generalizations and abstractions, it may be admitted that the history of æsthetic products shows progressive cycles, but each cycle has its own problem, and is progressive only in respect to that problem. When many are at work on the

same subject, without succeeding in giving to it the suitable form, yet drawing always more nearly to it, there is said to be progress. When he who gives to it definite form appears, the cycle is said to be complete, progress ended. A typical example of this would be the progress in the elaboration of the mode of using the subject-matter of chivalry, during the Italian Renaissance, from Pulci to Ariosto. (If this instance be made use of, excessive simplification of it must be excused.) Nothing but repetition and imitation could be the result of employing that same material after Ariosto. The result was repetition or imitation, diminution or exaggeration, a spoiling of what had already been achieved; in sum, decadence. The Ariostesque epigoni prove this. Progress begins with the commencement of a new cycle. Cervantes, with his more open and conscious irony, is an instance of this. In what did the general decadence of Italian literature at the end of the sixteenth century consist? Simply in having nothing more to say, and in repeating and exaggerating motives already found. If the Italians of this period had even been able to express their own decadence, they would not have been altogether failures, but have anticipated the literary movement of the

Renaissance. Where the subject-matter is not the same, a progressive cycle does not exist. Shakespeare does not represent a progress as regards Dante, nor Goethe as regards Shakespeare. Dante, however, represents a progress in respect to the visionaries of the Middle Ages, Shakespeare to the Elizabethan dramatists, Goethe, with *Werther* and the first part of *Faust*, in respect to the writers of the *Sturm und Drang*. This mode of presenting the history of poetry and art contains, however, as we have remarked, something of abstract, of merely practical, and is without rigorous philosophical value. Not only is the art of savages not inferior, as art, to that of civilized peoples, provided it be correlative to the impressions of the savage; but every individual, indeed every moment of the spiritual life of an individual, has its artistic world; and all those worlds are, artistically, incomparable with one another.

Errors committed in respect to this law.

Many have sinned and continue to sin against this special form of the criterion of progress in artistic and literary history. Some, for instance, talk of the infancy of Italian art in Giotto, and of its maturity in Raphael or in Titian; as though Giotto were not quite perfect and complete, in respect to his psychic material.

He was certainly incapable of drawing a figure like Raphael, or of colouring it like Titian; but was Raphael or Titian by any chance capable of creating the *Matrimonio di San Francesco con la Povertà*, or the *Morte di San Francesco*? The spirit of Giotto had not felt the attraction of the body beautiful, which the Renaissance studied and raised to a place of honour; but the spirits of Raphael and of Titian were no longer curious of certain movements of ardour and of tenderness, which attracted the man of the fourteenth century. How, then, can a comparison be made, where there is no comparative term?

The celebrated divisions of the history of art suffer from the same defect. They are as follows: an oriental period, representing a disequilibrium between idea and form, with prevalence of the second; a classical, representing an equilibrium between idea and form; a romantic, representing a new disequilibrium between idea and form, with prevalence of the idea. There are also the divisions into oriental art, representing imperfection of form; classical, perfection of form; romantic or modern, perfection of content and of form. Thus classic and romantic have also received, among their many other meanings, that of progressive or

regressive periods, in respect to the realization of some indefinite artistic ideal of humanity.

Other meanings of the word "progress" in respect to Æsthetic.

There is no such thing, then, as an *æsthetic* progress of humanity. However, by æsthetic progress is sometimes meant, not what the two words coupled together really signify, but the ever-increasing accumulation of our historical knowledge, which makes us able to sympathize with all the artistic products of all peoples and of all times, or, as is said, to make our taste more catholic. The difference appears very great, if the eighteenth century, so incapable of escaping from itself, be compared with our own time, which enjoys alike Hellenic and Roman art, now better understood, Byzantine, mediæval, Arabic, and Renaissance art, the art of the Cinque Cento, baroque art, and the art of the seventeenth century. Egyptian, Babylonian, Etruscan, and even prehistoric art, are more profoundly studied every day. Certainly, the difference between the savage and civilized man does not lie in the human faculties. The savage has speech, intellect, religion, and morality, in common with civilized man, and he is a complete man. The only difference lies in that civilized man penetrates and dominates a larger portion of the universe with his theoretic and practical activity.

We cannot claim to be more spiritually alert than, for example, the contemporaries of Pericles; but no one can deny that we are richer than they —rich with their riches and with those of how many other peoples and generations besides our own?

By æsthetic progress is also meant, in another sense, which is also improper, the greater abundance of artistic intuitions and the smaller number of imperfect or decadent works which one epoch produces in respect to another. Thus it may be said that there was æsthetic progress, an artistic awakening, at the end of the thirteenth or of the fifteenth centuries.

Finally, æsthetic progress is talked of, with an eye to the refinement and to the psychical complications exhibited in the works of art of the most civilized peoples, as compared with those of less civilized peoples, barbarians and savages. But in this case, the progress is that of the complex conditions of society, not of the artistic activity, to which the material is indifferent.

These are the most important points concerning the method of artistic and literary history.

XVIII

CONCLUSION:

IDENTITY OF LINGUISTIC AND ÆSTHETIC

Summary of the inquiry.

A GLANCE over the path traversed will show that we have completed the entire programme of our treatise. We have studied the nature of intuitive or expressive knowledge, which is the æsthetic or artistic fact (I. and II.), and we have described the other form of knowledge, namely, the intellectual, with the secondary complications of its forms (III.). Having done this, it became possible to criticize all erroneous theories of art, which arise from the confusion between the various forms, and from the undue transference of the characteristics of one form to those of another (IV.), and in so doing to indicate the inverse errors which are found in the theory of intellectual knowledge and of historiography (V.). Passing on to examine the relations between the æsthetic activity and the other spiritual activities, no longer theoretic but practical, we have indicated the true

character of the practical activity and the place which it occupies in respect to the theoretic activity, which it follows: hence the critique of the invasion of æsthetic theory by practical concepts (VI.). We have also distinguished the two forms of the practical activity, as economic and ethic (VII.), adding to this the statement that there are no other forms of the spirit beyond the four which we have analyzed; hence (VIII.) the critique of every metaphysical Æsthetic. And, seeing that there exist no other spiritual forms of equal degree, therefore there are no original subdivisions of the four established, and in particular of Æsthetic. From this arises the impossibility of classes of expressions and the critique of Rhetoric, that is, of the partition of expressions into simple and ornate, and of their subclasses (IX.). But, by the law of the unity of the spirit, the æsthetic fact is also a practical fact, and as such, occasions pleasure and pain. This led us to study the feelings of value in general, and those of æsthetic value, or of the beautiful, in particular (X.), to criticize æsthetic hedonism in all its various manifestations and complications (XI.), and to expel from the system of Æsthetic the long series of pseudo-æsthetic concepts, which had been introduced into it (XII.). Proceeding

from æsthetic production to the facts of reproduction, we began by investigating the mode of fixing externally the æsthetic expression, with the view of reproduction. This is the so-called physically beautiful, whether it be natural or artificial (XIII.). We then derived from this distinction the critique of the errors which arise from confounding the physical with the æsthetic side of things (XIV.). We indicated the meaning of artistic technique, that which is the technique serving for reproduction, thus criticizing the divisions, limits, and classifications of the individual arts, and establishing the connections between art, economy, and morality (XV.). Because the existence of the physical objects does not suffice to stimulate to the full æsthetic reproduction, and because, in order to obtain this result, it is necessary to recall the conditions in which the stimulus first operated, we have also studied the function of historical erudition, directed toward the end of re-establishing our communication with the works of the past, and toward the creation of a base for æsthetic judgment (XVI.). We have closed our treatise by showing how the reproduction thus obtained is afterwards elaborated by the intellectual categories, that is to say, by an

excursus on the method of literary and artistic history (XVII.).

The æsthetic fact has thus been considered both in itself and in its relations with the other spiritual activities, with the feelings of pleasure and of pain, with the facts that are called physical, with memory, and with historical elaboration. It has passed from the position of *subject* to that of *object*, that is to say, from the moment of *its birth*, until gradually it becomes changed for the spirit into *historical argument*.

Our treatise may appear to be somewhat meagre, when compared with the great volumes usually consecrated to Æsthetic. But it will not seem so, when it is observed that these volumes, as regards nine-tenths of their contents, are full of matter which does not appertain to Æsthetic, such as definitions, either psychical or metaphysical, of pseudo-æsthetic concepts (of the sublime, the comic, the tragic, the humorous, etc.), or of the exposition of the supposed Zoology, Botany, and Mineralogy of Æsthetic, and of universal history judged from the æsthetic standpoint. The whole history of concrete art and literature has also been dragged into those Æsthetics and generally mangled; they contain judgments upon Homer and Dante, upon Ariosto and Shakespeare,

upon Beethoven and Rossini, Michelangelo and Raphael. When all this has been deducted from them, our treatise will no longer be held to be too meagre, but, on the contrary, far more copious than ordinary treatises, for these either omit altogether, or hardly touch at all, the greater part of the difficult problems proper to Æsthetic, which we have felt it to be our duty to study.

Identity of Linguistic and Æsthetic.

Æsthetic, then, as the science of expression, has been here studied by us from every point of view. But there yet remains to justify the sub-title, which we have joined to the title of our book, *General Linguistic*, and to state and make clear the thesis that the science of art is that of language. Æsthetic and Linguistic, in so far as they are true sciences, are not two different sciences, but one single science. Not that there is a special Linguistic; but the linguistic science sought for, general Linguistic, *in so far as what it contains is reducible to philosophy*, is nothing but Æsthetic. Whoever studies general Linguistic, that is to say, philosophical Linguistic, studies æsthetic problems, and *vice versa*. *Philosophy of language and philosophy of art are the same thing.*

Were Linguistic a *different* science from Æsthetic, it should not have expression, which is

the essentially æsthetic fact, for its object. This amounts to saying that it must be denied that language is expression. But an emission of sounds, which expresses nothing, is not language. Language is articulate, limited, organized sound, employed in expression. If, on the other hand, language were a *special* science in respect to Æsthetic, it would necessarily have for its object a *special class* of expressions. But the inexistence of classes of expression is a point which we have already demonstrated.

Æsthetic formulization of linguistic problems. Nature of language.

The problems which Linguistic serves to solve, and the errors with which Linguistic strives and has striven, are the same that occupy and complicate Æsthetic. If it be not always easy, it is, on the other hand, always possible, to reduce the philosophic questions of Linguistic to their æsthetic formula.

The disputes as to the nature of the one find their parallel in those as to the nature of the other. Thus it has been disputed, whether Linguistic be a scientific or a historical discipline, and the scientific having been distinguished from the historical, it has been asked whether it belong to the order of the natural or of the psychological sciences, by the latter being understood empirical Psychology, as much as the science of the spirit. The same

has happened with Æsthetic, which some have looked upon as a natural science, confounding æsthetic expression with physical expression. Others have looked upon it as a psychological science, confounding expression in its universality, with the empirical classification of expressions. Others again, denying the very possibility of a science of such a subject, have looked upon it as a collection of historical facts. Finally, it has been realized that it belongs to the sciences of activity or of values, which are the spiritual sciences.

Linguistic expression, or speech, has often seemed to be a fact of *interjection*, which belongs to the so-called physical expressions of the feelings, common alike to men and animals. But it was soon admitted that an abyss yawns between the "Ah!" which is a physical reflex of pain, and a word; as also between that "Ah!" of pain and the "Ah!" employed as a word. The theory of the interjection being abandoned (jocosely termed the "Ah! Ah!" theory by German linguists), the theory of *association or convention* appeared. This theory was refuted by the same objection which destroyed æsthetic associationism in general: speech is unity, not multiplicity of images, and multiplicity does not explain, but

presupposes the existence of the expression to explain. A variant of linguistic associationism is the imitative, that is to say, the theory of the onomatopœia, which the same philologists deride under the name of the "bow-wow" theory, after the imitation of the dog's bark, which, according to the onomatopœists, gives its name to the dog.

The most usual theory of our times as regards language (apart from mere crass naturalism) consists of a sort of eclecticism or mixture of the various theories to which we have referred. It is assumed that language is in part the product of interjections and in part of onomatopes and conventions. This doctrine is altogether worthy of the scientific and philosophic decadence of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Origin of language and its development.

We must here note a mistake into which have fallen those very philologists who have best penetrated the active nature of language. These, although they admit that language was *originally a spiritual creation*, yet maintain that it was largely increased later by *association*. But the distinction does not prevail, for origin in this case cannot mean anything but nature or essence. If, therefore, language be a spiritual creation, it will always be a creation; if it be association, it will have been so from the beginning. The

mistake has arisen from not having grasped the general principle of Æsthetic, which we have noted: namely, that expressions already produced must redescend to the rank of impressions before they can give rise to new impressions. When we utter new words, we generally transform the old ones, varying or enlarging their meaning; but this process is not associative, it is creative, although the creation has for material the impressions, not of the hypothetical primitive man, but of man who has lived long ages in society, and who has, so to say, stored so many things in his psychic organism, and among them so much language.

Relation between Grammar and Logic.

The question of the distinction between the æsthetic and the intellectual fact has appeared in Linguistic as that of the relations between Grammar and Logic. This question has found two solutions, which are partially true: that of the indissolubility of Logic and Grammar, and that of their dissolubility. The complete solution is this: if the logical form be indissoluble from the grammatical (æsthetic), the grammatical is dissoluble from the logical.

Grammatical classes or parts of speech.

If we look at a picture which, for example, portrays a man walking on a country road, we can say: "This picture represents a fact of movement,

which, if conceived as volitional, is called *action.* And because every movement implies *matter*, and every action a being that acts, this picture also represents either *matter* or a *being.* But this movement takes place in a definite place, which is a part of a given *star* (the Earth), and precisely in that part of it which is called *terra-firma*, and more properly in a part of it that is wooded and covered with grass, which is called *country*, cut naturally or artificially, in a manner which is called *road.* Now, there is only one example of that given star, which is called Earth: Earth is an *individual.* But *terra-firma*, *country*, *road*, are *classes or universals*, because there are other terra-firmas, other countries, other roads." And it would be possible to continue for a while with similar considerations. By substituting a phrase for the picture that we have imagined, for example, one to this effect, "Peter is walking on a country road," and by making the same remarks, we obtain the concepts of *verb* (motion or action), of *noun* (matter or agent), of *proper noun*, of *common nouns*; and so on.

What have we done in both cases? Neither more nor less than to submit to logical elaboration what was first elaborated only æsthetically; that is to say, we have destroyed the æsthetical by the

logical. But, as in general Æsthetic, error begins when it is wished to return from the logical to the æsthetical, and it is asked what is the expression of movement, action, matter, being, of the general, of the individual, etc.; thus in like manner with language, error begins when motion or action are called verb, being, or matter, noun or substantive, and when linguistic categories, or *parts of speech*, are made of all these, noun and verb and so on. The theory of parts of speech is at bottom altogether the same as that of artistic and literary classes, already criticized in the Æsthetic.

It is false to say that the verb or the noun is expressed in definite words, truly distinguishable from others. Expression is an indivisible whole. Noun and verb do not exist in themselves, but are abstractions made by our destroying the sole linguistic reality, which is *the proposition*. This last is to be understood, not in the usual mode of grammarians, but as an organism expressive of a complete meaning, from an exclamation to a poem. This sounds paradoxical, but is nevertheless a most simple truth.

And as in Æsthetic, the artistic productions of certain peoples have been looked upon as imperfect, owing to the error above mentioned,

because the supposed kinds have seemed still to be indiscriminate or absent with them; so, in Linguistic, the theory of the parts of speech has caused the analogous error of dividing languages into formed and unformed, according to whether there appear in them or not some of those supposed parts of speech; for example, the verb.

The individuality of speech and the classification of languages.

Linguistic also discovered the irreducible individuality of the æsthetic fact, when it affirmed that the word is what is really spoken, and that two truly identical words do not exist. Thus were synonyms and homonyms destroyed, and th s was shown the impossibility of really translating one word into another, from so-called dialect into so-called language, and from a so-called mother-tongue into a so-called foreign tongue.

But the attempt to classify languages agrees ill with this correct view. Languages have no reality beyond the propositions and complexes of propositions really written and pronounced by given peoples for definite periods. That is to say, they have no existence outside the works of art, in which they exist concretely. What is the art of a given people but the complex of all its artistic products? What is

the character of an art (say, Hellenic art or Provençal literature), but the complex physiognomy of those products? And how can such a question be answered, save by giving the history of their art (of their literature, that is to say, of their language in action)?

It will seem that this argument, although possessing value as against many of the wonted classifications of languages, yet is without any as regards that queen of classifications, the historico-genealogical, that glory of comparative philology. And this is certainly true. But why? Precisely because the historico-genealogical method is not a classification. He who writes history does not classify, and the philologists themselves have hastened to say that the languages which can be arranged in a historical series (those whose series have been traced) are, not distinct and definite species, but a complex of facts in the various phases of its development.

Impossibility of a normative grammar.

Language has sometimes been looked upon as an act of volition or of choice. But others have discovered the impossibility of creating language artificially, by an act of will. *Tu, Caesar, civitatem dare potes homini, verbo non potes!* was once said to the Roman Emperor.

The æsthetic (and therefore theoretic) nature

of expression supplies the method of correcting the scientific error which lies in the conception of a (normative) *Grammar*, containing the rules of speaking well. Good sense has always rebelled against this error. An example of such rebellion is the "So much the worse for grammar" of Voltaire. But the impossibility of a normative grammar is also recognized by those who teach it, when they confess that to write well cannot be learned by rules, that there are no rules without exceptions, and that the study of Grammar should be conducted practically, by reading and by examples, which form the literary taste. The scientific reason of this impossibility lies in what we have already proved: that a technique of the theoretical amounts to a contradiction in terms. And what could a (normative) grammar be, but just a technique of linguistic expression, that is to say, of a theoretic fact?

Didactic purposes.

The case in which Grammar is understood merely as an empirical discipline, that is to say, as a collection of groups useful for learning languages, without any claim whatever to philosophic truth, is quite different. Even the abstractions of the parts of speech are in this case both admissible and of assistance.

Many books entitled treatises of Linguistic have a merely didactic purpose; they are simply scholastic manuals. We find in them, in truth, a little of everything, from the description of the vocal apparatus and of the artificial machines (phonographs) which can imitate it, to summaries of the most important results obtained by Indo-European, Semitic, Coptic, Chinese, or other philologies; from philosophic generalizations on the origin or nature of language, to advice on calligraphy, and the arrangement of schedules for philological spoils. But this mass of notions, which is here taught in a fragmentary and incomplete manner as regards the language in its essence, the language as expression, resolves itself into notions of Æsthetic. Nothing exists outside *Æsthetic*, which gives knowledge of the nature of language, and *empirical Grammar*, which is a pedagogic expedient, save the *History of languages* in their living reality, that is, the history of concrete literary productions, which is substantially identical with the *History of literature.*

Elementary linguistic facts, or roots.

The same mistake of confusing the physical with the æsthetic, from which the elementary forms of the beautiful originate, is made by those who seek for elementary æsthetic facts,

decorating with that name the divisions of the longer series of physical sounds into shorter series. Syllables, vowels, and consonants, and the series of syllables called words, which give no definite sense when taken alone, are not facts of language, but simple physical concepts of sounds.

Another mistake of the same sort is that of roots, to which the most able philologists now accord but a very limited value. Having confused physical with linguistic or expressive facts, and observing that, in the order of ideas, the simple precedes the complex, they necessarily ended by thinking that *the smaller* physical facts were *the more simple.* Hence the imaginary necessity that the most antique, primitive languages, had been monosyllabic, and that the progress of historical research must lead to the discovery of monosyllabic roots. But (to follow up the imaginary hypothesis) the first expression that the first man conceived may also have had a mimetic, not a phonic reflex: it may have been exteriorised, not in a sound but in a gesture. And assuming that it was exteriorised in a sound, there is no reason to suppose that sound to have been monosyllabic rather than pluri-syllabic. Philologists frequently blame their own ignorance and impotence, if they do not always

succeed in reducing plurisyllabism to monosyllabism, and they trust in the future. But their faith is without foundation, as their blame of themselves is an act of humility arising from an erroneous presumption.

Furthermore, the limits of syllables, as those of words, are altogether arbitrary, and distinguished, as well as may be, by empirical use. Primitive speech, or the speech of the uncultured man, is *continuous*, unaccompanied by any reflex consciousness of the divisions of the word and of the syllables, which are taught at school. No true law of Linguistic can be founded on such divisions. Proof of this is to be found in the confession of linguists, that there are no truly phonetic laws of the hiatus, of cacophony, of diæresis, of synæresis, but merely laws of taste and convenience; that is to say, *æsthetic* laws. And what are the laws of *words* which are not at the same time laws of *style*?

Æsthetic judgment and the model language.

The search for a *model language*, or for a method of reducing linguistic usage to *unity*, arises from the misconception of a rationalistic measurement of the beautiful, from the concept which we have termed that of false æsthetic absoluteness. In Italy, we call this question that of the *unity of the language*.

Language is perpetual creation. What has been linguistically expressed cannot be repeated, save by the reproduction of what has already been produced. The ever-new impressions give rise to continuous changes of sounds and of meanings, that is, to ever-new expressions. To seek the model language, then, is to seek the immobility of motion. Every one speaks, and should speak, according to the echoes which things arouse in his soul, that is, according to his impressions. It is not without reason that the most convinced supporter of any one of the solutions of the problem of the unity of language (be it by the use of Latin, of fourteenth-century Italian, or of Florentine) feels a repugnance in applying his theory, when he is speaking in order to communicate his thoughts and to make himself understood. The reason for this is that he feels that were he to substitute Latin, fourteenth-century Italian, or Florentine speech for that of a different origin, but which answers to his impressions, he would be falsifying the latter. He would become a vain listener to himself, instead of a speaker, a pedant in place of a serious man, a histrion instead of a sincere person. To write according to a theory is not really to write: at the most, it is *making literature.*

The question of the unity of language is always reappearing, because, put as it is, there can be no solution to it, owing to its being based upon a false conception of what language is. Language is not an arsenal of ready-made arms, and it is not *vocabulary*, which, in so far as it is thought of as progressive and in living use, is always a cemetery, containing corpses more or less well embalmed, that is to say, a collection of abstractions.

Our mode of settling the question of the model language, or of the unity of the language, may seem somewhat abrupt, and yet we would not wish to appear otherwise than respectful towards the long line of literary men who have debated this question in Italy for centuries. But those ardent debates were, at bottom, debates upon æstheticity, not upon æsthetic science, upon literature rather than upon literary theory, upon effective speaking and writing, not upon linguistic science. Their error consisted in transforming the manifestation of a want into a scientific thesis, the need of understanding one another more easily among a people dialectically divided, in the philosophic search for a language, which should be one or ideal. Such a search was as absurd as that other search for a *universal*

language, with the immobility of the concept and of the abstraction. The social need for a better understanding of one another cannot be satisfied save by universal culture, by the increase of communications, and by the interchange of thought among men.

Conclusion.

These observations must suffice to show that all the scientific problems of Linguistic are the same as those of Æsthetic, and that the truths and errors of the one are the truths and errors of the other. If Linguistic and Æsthetic appear to be two different sciences, this arises from the fact that people think of the former as grammar, or as a mixture between philosophy and grammar, that is, an arbitrary mnemonic scheme. They do not think of it as a rational science and as a pure philosophy of speech. Grammar, or something grammatical, also causes the prejudice in people's minds, that the reality of language lies in isolated and combinable words, not in living discourse among expressive organisms, rationally indivisible.

Those linguists, or glottologists with philosophical endowments, who have best fathomed questions of language, resemble (to employ a worn but efficacious figure) workmen piercing a tunnel: at a certain point they must hear the

voices of their companions, the philosophers of Æsthetic, who have been piercing it from the other side. At a certain stage of scientific elaboration, Linguistic, in so far as it is philosophy, must be merged in Æsthetic; and indeed it is merged in it, without leaving a residue.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

I

ÆSTHETIC IDEAS IN GRÆCO-ROMAN ANTIQUITY

THE question, as to whether Æsthetic should be looked upon as ancient or modern, has often been discussed. The answer will depend upon the view taken of the nature of Æsthetic.

Benedetto Croce has proved that Æsthetic is *the science of expressive activity*. But this knowledge cannot be reached, until has been defined the nature of imagination, of representation, of expression, or whatever we may term that faculty which is theoretic, but not intellectual, which gives knowledge of the individual, but not of the universal.

Now the deviations from this, the correct theory, may arise in two ways: by *defect* or by *excess*. Negation of the special æsthetic activity, or of its autonomy, is an instance of the former. This amounts to a mutilation of the reality of the spirit. Of the latter, the substitution or superposition of another mysterious and non-existent activity is an example.

These errors each take several forms. That which errs by defect may be: (*a*) pure hedonism, which looks upon art as merely sensual pleasure; (*b*) rigoristic hedonism, agreeing with (*a*), but adding that art is irreconcilable with the loftiest activities of man; (*c*)

moralistic or pedagogic hedonism, which admits, with the two former, that art is mere sensuality, but believes that it may not only be harmless, but of some service to morals, if kept in proper subjection and obedience.

The error by excess also assumes several forms, but these are indeterminable *a priori*. This view is fully dealt with under the name of *mystic*, in the Theory and in the Appendix.

Græco-Roman antiquity was occupied with the problem in all these forms. In Greece, the problem of art and of the artistic faculty arose for the first time after the sophistic movement, as a result of the Socratic polemic.

With the appearance of the word *mimesis* or *mimetic*, we have a first attempt at grouping the arts, and the expression, allegoric, or its equivalent, used in defence of Homer's poetry, reminds us of what Plato called "the old quarrel between philosophy and poetry."

But when internal facts were all looked upon as mere phenomena of opinion or feeling, of pleasure or of pain, of illusion or of arbitrary caprice, there could be no question of beautiful or ugly, of difference between the true and the beautiful, or between the beautiful and the good.

The problem of the nature of art assumes as solved those problems concerning the difference between rational and irrational, material and spiritual, bare fact and value, etc. This was first done in the Socratic period, and therefore the æsthetic problem could only arise after Socrates.

And in fact it does arise, with Plato, *the author*

of the only great negation of art which appears in the history of ideas.

Is art rational or irrational? Does it belong to the noble region of the soul, where dwell philosophy and virtue, or does it cohabit with sensuality and with crude passion in the lower regions? This was the question that Plato asked, and thus was the æsthetic problem stated for the first time.

His Gorgias remarks with sceptical acumen, that tragedy is a deception, which brings honour alike to deceived and to deceiver, and therefore it is blameworthy not to know how to deceive and not to allow oneself to be deceived. This suffices for Gorgias, but Plato, the philosopher, must resolve the doubt. If it be in fact deception, down with tragedy and the other arts! If it be not deception, then what is the place of tragedy in philosophy and in the righteous life? His answer was that art or mimetic does not realize the ideas, or the truth of things, but merely reproduces natural or artificial things, which are themselves mere shadows of the ideas. Art, then, is but a shadow of a shadow, a thing of third-rate degree. The artificer fashions the object which the painter paints. The artificer copies the divine idea and the painter copies him. Art therefore does not belong to the rational, but to the irrational, sensual sphere of the soul. It can serve but for sensual pleasure, which disturbs and obscures. Therefore must mimetic, poetry, and poets be excluded from the perfect Republic.

Plato observed with truth, that imitation does not rise to the logical or conceptual sphere, of which poets and painters, as such, are, in fact, ignorant.

But he *failed to realize* that there could be any form of knowledge other than the intellectual.

We now know that intuition lies on this side or outside the intellect, from which it differs as much as it does from passion and sensuality.

Plato, with his fine æsthetic sense, would have been grateful to anyone who could have shown him how to place art, which he loved and practised so supremely himself, among the lofty activities of the spirit. But in his day, no one could give him such assistance. His conscience and his reason saw that art makes the false seem the true, and therefore he resolutely banished it to the lower regions of the spirit.

The tendency among those who followed Plato in time was to find some means of retaining art and of depriving it of the baleful influence which it was believed to exercise. Life without art was to the beauty-loving Greek an impossibility, although he was equally conscious of the demands of reason and of morality. Thus it happened that art, which, on the purely hedonistic hypothesis, had been treated as a beautiful courtezan, became in the hands of the moralist, a pedagogue. Aristophanes and Strabo, and above all Aristotle, dwell upon the didactic and moralistic possibility of poetry. For Plutarch, poetry seems to have been a sort of preparation for philosophy, a twilight to which the eyes should grow accustomed, before emerging into the full light of day.

Among the Romans, we find Lucretius comparing the beauties of his great poem to the sweet yellow honey, with which doctors are wont to anoint the rim of the cup containing their bitter drugs. Horace,

as so frequently, takes his inspiration from the Greek, when he offers the double view of art: as courtezan and as pedagogue. In his *Ad Pisones* occur the passages, in which we find mingled with the poetic function, that of the orator—the practical and the æsthetic. "Was Virgil a poet or an orator?" The triple duty of pleasing, moving, and teaching, was imposed upon the poet. Then, with a thought for the supposed meretricious nature of their art, the ingenious Horace remarks that both must employ the seductions of form.

The *mystic* view of art appeared only in late antiquity, with Plotinus. The curious error of looking upon Plato as the head of this school and as the Father of Æsthetic assumes that he who felt obliged to banish art altogether from the domain of the higher functions of the spirit, was yet ready to yield to it the highest place there. The mystical view of Æsthetic accords a lofty place indeed to Æsthetic, placing it even above philosophy. The enthusiastic praise of the beautiful, to be found in the *Gorgias*, *Philebus*, *Phædrus*, and *Symposium* is responsible for this misunderstanding, but it is well to make perfectly clear that the beautiful, of which Plato discourses in those dialogues, has nothing to do with the *artistically* beautiful, nor with the mysticism of the neo-Platonicians.

Yet the thinkers of antiquity were aware that a problem lay in the direction of Æsthetic, and Xenophon records the sayings of Socrates that the beautiful is "that which is fitting and answers to the end required." Elsewhere he says "it is that which is loved." Plato likewise vibrates between various views and offers several solutions. Sometimes he appears almost to

confound the beautiful with the true, the good and the divine; at others he leans toward the utilitarian view of Socrates; at others he distinguishes between what is beautiful in itself and what possesses but a relative beauty. At other times again, he is a hedonist, and makes it to consist of pure pleasure, that is, of pleasure with no shadow of pain; or he finds it in measure and proportion, or in the very sound, the very colour itself. The reason for all this vacillation of definition lay in Plato's exclusion of the artistic or mimetic fact from the domain of the higher spiritual activities. The *Hippias major* expresses this uncertainty more completely than any of the other dialogues. What is the beautiful? that is the question asked at the beginning, and left unanswered at the end. The Platonic Socrates and Hippias propose the most various solutions, one after another, but always come out by the gate by which they entered in. Is the beautiful to be found in ornament? No, for gold embellishes only where it is in keeping. Is the beautiful that which seems ugly to no man? But it is a question of being, not of seeming. Is it their fitness which makes things seem beautiful? But in that case, the fitness which makes them appear beautiful is one thing, the beautiful another. If the beautiful be the useful or that which leads to an end, then evil would also be beautiful, because the useful may also end evilly. Is the beautiful the helpful, that which leads to the good? No, for in that case the good would not be beautiful, nor the beautiful good, because cause and effect are different.

Thus they argued in the Platonic dialogues, and when we turn to the pages of Aristotle, we find him also uncertain and inclined to vary his

definitions.[1] Sometimes for him the good and pleasurable are the beautiful, sometimes it lies in actions, at others in things motionless, or in bulk and order, or is altogether undefinable. Antiquity also established canons of the beautiful, and the famous canon of Polycleitus, on the proportions of the human body, fitly compares with that of later times on the golden line, and with the Ciceronian phrase from the Tusculan Disputations. But these are all of them mere empirical observations, mere happy remarks and verbal substitutions, which lead to unsurmountable difficulties when put to philosophical test.

One important identification is absent in all those early attempts at truth. The beautiful is never identified with art, and the artistic fact is always clearly distinguished from beauty, mimetic from its content. Plotinus first identified the two, and with him the beautiful and art are dissolved together in a passion and mystic elevation of the spirit. The beauty of natural objects is the archetype existing in the soul, which is the fountain of all natural beauty. Thus was Plato (he said) in error, when he despised the arts for imitating nature, for nature herself imitates the idea, and art also seeks her inspiration directly from those ideas whence nature proceeds. We have here, with Plotinus and with Neoplatonism, the first appearance in the world of mystical Æsthetic, destined to play so important a part in later æsthetic theory.

Aristotle was far more happy in his attempts at defining Æsthetic as the science of representation and of expression than in his definitions of the beautiful. He

[1] In the Appendix will be found further striking quotations from and references to Aristotle.—(D. A.)

felt that some element of the problem had been overlooked, and in attempting in his turn a solution, he had the advantage over Plato of looking upon the ideas as simple concepts, not as hypostases of concepts or of abstractions. Thus reality was more vivid for Aristotle: it was the synthesis of matter and form. He saw that art, or mimetic, was a theoretic fact, or a mode of contemplation. "But if Poetry be a theoretic fact, in what way is it to be distinguished from science and from historical knowledge?" Thus magnificently does the great philosopher pose the problem at the commencement of his *Poetics*, and thus alone can it be posed successfully. We ask the same question in the same words to-day. But the problem is difficult, and the masterly statement of it was not equalled by the method of solution then available. He made an excellent start on his voyage of discovery, but stopped half way, irresolute and perplexed. Poetry, he says, differs from history, by portraying the possible, while history deals with what has really happened. Poetry, like philosophy, aims at the universal, but in a different way, which the philosopher indicates as something more (*μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου*) which differentiates poetry from history, occupied with the particular (*μᾶλλον τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον*). What, then, is the possible, the something more, and the particular of poetry? Aristotle immediately falls into error and confusion, when he attempts to define these words. Since art has to deal with the absurd and with the impossible, it cannot be anything rational, but a mere imitation of reality, in accordance with the Platonic theory—a fact of sensual pleasure. Aristotle does not, however, attain to so precise a definition as Plato,

whose erroneous definition he does not succeed in supplanting. The truth is that he failed of his self-imposed task; he failed to discern the true nature of Æsthetic, although he restated and re-examined the problem with such marvellous acumen.

After Aristotle, there comes a lull in the discussion, until Plotinus. The *Poetics* were generally little studied, and the admirable statement of the problem generally neglected by later writers. Antique psychology knew the fancy or imagination, as preserving or reproducing sensuous impressions, or as an intermediary between the concepts and feeling: its autonomous productive activity was not yet understood. In the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Philostratus is said to have been the first to make clear the difference between mimetic and creative imagination. But this does not in reality differ from the Aristotelian mimetic, which is concerned, not only with the real, but also with the possible. Cicero too, before Philostratus, speaks of a kind of exquisite beauty lying hidden in the soul of the artist, which guides his hand and art. Antiquity seems generally to have been entrammelled in the meshes of the belief in mimetic, or the duplication of natural objects by the artist. Philostratus and the other protagonists of the imagination may have meant to combat this error, but the shadows lie heavy until we reach Plotinus.

We find already astir among the sophists the question as to the nature of language. Admitting that language is a sign, are we to take that as signifying a spiritual necessity (φύσις) or as a psychological convention (νόμος)? Aristotle made a valuable contribution to this difficult question, when he spoke of

a kind of proposition other than those which predicate truth or falsehood, that is, logic. With him εὐχή is the term proper to designate desires and aspirations, which are the vehicle of poetry and of oratory. (It must be remembered that for Aristotle words, like poetry, belonged to mimetic.) The profound remark about the third mode of proposition would, one would have thought, have led naturally to the separation of linguistic from logic, and to its classification with poetry and art. But the Aristotelian logic assumed a verbal and formal character, which set back the attainment of this position by many hundred years. Yet the genius of Epicurus had an intuition of the truth, when he remarked that the diversity of names for the same things arose, not from arbitrary caprice, but from the diverse impression derived from the same object. The Stoics, too, seem to have had an inkling of the non-logical nature of speech, but their use of the word λεκτόν leaves it doubtful whether they distinguished by it the linguistic representation from the abstract concept, or rather, generically, the meaning from the sound.

II

ÆSTHETIC IDEAS IN THE MIDDLE AGE AND IN THE RENAISSANCE

WELL-NIGH all the theories of antique Æsthetic reappear in the Middle Ages, as it were by spontaneous generation. Duns Scotus Erigena translated the Neoplatonic mysticism of the pseudo-Dionysus. The Christian God took the place of the chief Good or Idea: God, wisdom, goodness, supreme beauty are the

fountains of natural beauty, and these are steps in the stair of contemplation of the Creator. In this manner speculation began to be diverted from the art fact, which had been so prominent with Plotinus. Thomas Aquinas followed Aristotle in distinguishing the beautiful from the good, and applied his doctrine of imitation to the beauty of the second person of the Trinity (*in quantum est imago expressa Patris*). With the troubadours, we may find traces of the hedonistic view of art, and the rigoristic hypothesis finds in Tertullian and in certain Fathers of the Church staunch upholders. The retrograde Savonarola occupied the same position at a later period. But the narcotic, moralistic, or pedagogic view mostly prevailed, for it best suited an epoch of relative decadence in culture. It suited admirably the Middle Age, offering at once an excuse for the new-born Christian art, and for those works of classical or pagan art which yet survived. Specimens of this view abound all through the Middle Age. We find it, for instance, in the criticism of Virgil, to whose work were attributed four distinct meanings: literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogic. For Dante poetry was *nihil aliud quam fictio rhetorica in musicaque posita.* "If the vulgar be incapable of appreciating my inner meaning, then they shall at least incline their minds to the perfection of my beauty. If from me ye cannot gather wisdom, at the least shall ye enjoy me as a pleasant thing." Thus spoke the Muse of Dante, whose *Convivio* is an attempt to aid the understanding in its effort to grasp the moral and pedagogic elements of verse. Poetry was the *gaia scienza*, "a fiction containing many useful things covered or veiled."

It would be inexact to identify art in the Middle Age with philosophy and theology. Its pleasing falsity could be adapted to useful ends, much in the same way as matrimony excuses love and sexual union. This, however, implies that for the Middle Age the ideal state was celibacy; that is, pure knowledge, divorced from art.

The only line of explanation that was altogether neglected in the Middle Age was the right one.

The *Poetics* of Aristotle were badly rendered into Latin, from the faulty paraphrase of Averroes, by one Hermann (1256). The nominalist and realist dispute brought again into the arena the relations between thought and speech, and we find Duns Scotus occupied with the problem in his *De modis significandi seu grammatica speculativa.* Abelard had defined sensation as *confusa conceptio*, and with the importance given to intuitive knowledge, to the perception of the individual, of the *species specialissima* in Duns Scotus, together with the denomination of the forms of knowledge as *confusae*, *indistinctae*, and *distinctae*, we enter upon a terminology, which we shall see appearing again, big with results, at the commencement of modern Æsthetic.

The doctrine of the Middle Age, in respect to art and letters, may thus be regarded as of interest rather to the history of culture than to that of general knowledge. A like remark holds good of the Renaissance. Theories of antiquity are studied, countless treatises in many forms are written upon them, but no really new ideas as regards æsthetic science appear on the horizon.

We find among the spokesmen of mystical Æsthetic in the thirteenth century such names as Marsilio Ficino

and Pico della Mirandola. Bembo and many others wrote on the Beautiful and on Love in the century that followed. The *Dialogi di Amore*, written in Italian by a Spanish Jew named Leone and published in 1535, had a European success, being translated into many languages. He talks of the universality of love and of its origin, of beauty that is grace, which delights the soul and impels it to love. Knowledge of lesser beauties leads to loftier spiritual beauties. Leone called these remarks *Philographia.*

Petrarch's followers versified similar intuitions, while others wrote parodies and burlesques of this style; Luca Paciolo, the friend of Leonardo, made the (false) discovery of the golden section, basing his speculating upon mathematics; Michael Angelo established an empirical canon for painting, attempting to give rules for imparting grace and movement to figures, by means of certain arithmetical proportions; others found special meanings in colours; while the Platonicians placed the seat of beauty in the soul, the Aristotelians in physical qualities. Agostino Nifo, the Averroïst, after some inconclusive remarks, is at last fortunate enough to discover where natural beauty really dwells: its abode is the body of Giovanna d'Aragona, Princess of Tagliacozzo, to whom he dedicates his book. Tasso mingled the speculations of the *Hippias major* with those of Plotinus.

Tommaso Campanella, in his *Poetica,* looks upon the beautiful as *signum boni*, the ugly as *signum mali.* By goodness, he means Power, Wisdom, and Love. Campanella was still under the influence of the erroneous Platonic conception of the beautiful, but the use of the word *sign* in this place represents

progress. It enabled him to see that things in themselves are neither beautiful nor ugly.

Nothing proves more clearly that the Renaissance did not overstep the limits of æsthetic theory reached in antiquity, than the fact that the pedagogic theory of art continued to prevail, in the face of translations of the *Poetics* of Aristotle and of the diffuse labours expended upon that work. This theory was even grafted upon the *Poetics*, where one is surprised to find it. There are a few hedonists standing out from the general trend of opinion. The restatement of the pedagogic position, reinforced with examples taken from antiquity, was disseminated throughout Europe by the Italians of the Renaissance. France, Spain, England, and Germany felt its influence, and we find the writers of the period of Louis XIV. either frankly didactic, like Le Bossu (1675), for whom the first object of the poet is to instruct, or with La Ménardière (1640) speaking of poetry as "cette science agréable qui mêle la gravité des préceptes avec la douceur du langage." For the former of these critics, Homer was the author of two didactic manuals relating to military and political matters: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Didacticism has always been looked upon as the Poetic of the Renaissance, although the didactic is not mentioned among the kinds of poetry of that period. The reason of this lies in the fact that for the Renaissance all poetry was didactic, in addition to any other qualities which it might possess. The active discussion of poetic theory, the criticism of Aristotle and of Plato's exclusion of poetry, of the possible and of the verisimilar, if it did not contribute much original material to the theory of art, yet at

any rate sowed the seeds which afterwards germinated and bore fruit. Why, they asked with Aristotle, at the Renaissance, does poetry deal with the universal, history with the particular? What is the reason for poetry being obliged to seek verisimilitude? What does Raphael mean by the "certain idea," which he follows in his painting?

These themes and others cognate were dealt with by Italian and by Spanish writers, who occasionally reveal wonderful acumen, as when Francesco Patrizio, criticizing Aristotle's theory of imitation, remarks: "All languages and all philosophic writings and all other writings would be poetry, because they are made of words, and words are imitations." But as yet no one dared follow such a clue to the labyrinth, and the Renaissance closes with the sense of a mystery yet to be revealed.

III

SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

THE seventeenth century is remarkable for the ferment of thought upon this difficult problem. Such words as genius, taste, imagination or fancy, and feeling, appear in this literature, and deserve a passing notice. As regards the word "genius," we find the Italian "ingegno" opposed to the intellect, and Dialectic adorned with the attributes of the latter, while Rhetoric has the advantage of "ingegno" in all its forms, such as "concetti" and "acutezze." With these the English word ingenious has an obvious connection, especially in its earlier use as applied to men of letters. The French worked upon the word "ingegno"

and evolved from it in various associations the expressions "esprit," "beaux Esprits." The manual of the Spanish Jesuit, Baltasar Gracian, became celebrated throughout Europe, and here we find "ingegno" described as the truly inventive faculty, and from it the English word "genius," the Italian "genio," the French "génie," first enter into general use.

The word "gusto" or taste, "good taste," in its modern sense, also sprang into use about this time. Taste was held to be a judicial faculty, directed to the beautiful, and thus to some extent distinct from the intellectual judgment. It was further bisected into active and passive; but the former ran into the definition of "ingegno," the latter described sterility. The word "gusto," or taste as judgment, was in use in Italy at a very early period; and in Spain we find Lope di Vega and his contemporaries declaring that their object is to "delight the taste" of their public. These uses of the word are not of significance as regards the problem of art, and we must return to Baltasar Gracian (1642) for a definition of taste as a special faculty or attitude of the soul. Italian writers of the period echo the praises of this laconic moralist, who, when he spoke of "a man of taste," meant to describe what we call to-day "a man of tact" in the conduct of life.

The first use of the word in a strictly æsthetic sense occurs in France in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. La Bruyère writes in his *Caractères* (1688): "Il y a dans l'art un point de perfection, comme de bonté ou de maturité dans la nature: celui qui le sent et qui l'aime, a le goût parfait; celui qui ne le sent pas, et qui aime au

deçà ou au delà, a le goût défectueux. Il y a donc un bon et un mauvais goût, et l'on dispute des goûts avec fondement." Delicacy and variability or variety were appended as attributes of taste. This French definition of the Italian word was speedily adopted in England, where it became "good taste," and we find it used in this sense in Italian and German writers of about this period.

The words "imagination" and "fancy" were also passed through the crucible in this century. We find the Cardinal Sforza-Pallavicino (1644) blaming those who look for truth or falsehood, for the verisimilar or for historical truth, in poetry. Poetry, he holds, has to do with the primary apprehensions, which give neither truth nor falsehood. Thus the fancy takes the place of the verisimilar of certain students of Aristotle. The Cardinal continues his eloquence with the clinching remark that if the intention of poetry were to be believed true, then its real end would be falsehood, which is absolutely condemned by the law of nature and by God. The sole object of poetic fables is, he says, to adorn our intellect with sumptuous, new, marvellous, and splendid imaginings, and so great has been the benefits accruing from this to the human race, that poets have been rewarded with a glory superior to any other, and their names have been crowned with divine honours. This, he says in his treatise, *Del Bene*, has been the just reward of poets, albeit they have not been bearers of knowledge, nor have they manifested truth.

This throwing of the bridle on the neck of Pegasus seemed to Muratori sixty years later to be altogether too risky a proceeding—although advocated by a Prince of the Church! He reinserts the bit of the verisimilar,

though he talks with admiration of the fancy, that "inferior apprehensive" faculty, which is content to "represent" things, without seeking to know if they be true or false, a task which it leaves to the "superior apprehensive" faculty of the intellect. The severe Gravina, too, finds his heart touched by the beauty of poetry, when he calls it "a witch, but wholesome."

As early as 1578, Huarte had maintained that eloquence is the work of the imagination, not of the intellect; in England, Bacon (1605) attributed knowledge to the intellect, history to memory, and poetry to the imagination or fancy; Hobbes described the manifestations of the latter; and Addison devoted several numbers of the *Spectator* to the analysis of "the pleasures of the imagination."

During the same period, the division between those who are accustomed "à juger par le sentiment" and those who "raisonnent par les principes" became marked in France. Du Bos (1719) is an interesting example of the upholder of the feelings as regards the production of art. Indeed, there is in his view no other criterion, and the feeling for art is a sixth sense, against which intellectual argument is useless. This French school of thought found a reflex in England with the position assigned there to emotion in artistic work. But the confusion of such words as imagination, taste, feeling, wit, shows that at this time there was a suspicion that these words were all applicable to the same fact. Alexander Pope thus distinguished wit and judgment:

> For wit and judgment often are at strife,
> Though meant each other's aid like man and wife.

But there was a divergence of opinion as to whether

the latter should be looked upon as part of the intellect or not.

There was the same divergence of opinion as to taste and intellectual judgment. As regards the former, the opposition to the intellectual principle was reinforced in the eighteenth century by Kant in his *Kritik der Urtheilskraft.* But Voltaire and writers anterior to him frequently fell back into intellectualist definitions of a word invented precisely to avoid them. Dacier (1684) writes of taste as "Une harmonie, un accord de l'esprit et de la raison." The difficulties surrounding a true definition led to the creation of the expression *non so che*, or *je ne sais quoi*, or *no se qué*, which throws into clear relief the confusion between taste and intellectual judgment.

As regards imagination and feeling, or sentiment, there was a strong tendency to sensualism. The Cardinal Sforza-Pallavicino talks of poetry as ignoring alike truth or falsehood and yet delighting the senses. He approves of the remark that poetry should make us "raise our eyebrows," but in later life this keen-eyed prince seems to have fallen back from the brilliant intuition of his earlier years into the pedagogic theory. Muratori was convinced that fancy was entirely sensual, and therefore he posted the intellect beside it, "to refrain its wild courses, like a friend having authority." Gravina practically coincides in this view of poetic fancy, as a subordinate faculty, incapable of knowledge, fit only to be used by moral philosophy for the introduction into the mind of the true, by means of novelty and the marvellous.

In England, also, Bacon held poetry to belong to the fancy, and assigned to it a place between history

and science. Epic poetry he awarded to the former, "parabolic" poetry to the latter. Elsewhere he talks of poetry as a dream, and affirms that it is to be held "rather as an amusement of the intelligence than as a science." For him music, painting, sculpture, and the other arts are merely pleasure-giving. Addisón reduced the pleasures of the imagination to those caused by visible objects, or by ideas taken from them. These pleasures he held to be inferior to those of the senses and less refined than those of the intellect. He looked upon imaginative pleasure as consisting in resemblances discovered between imitations and things imitated, between copies and originals, an exercise adapted to sharpen the spirit of observation.

The sensualism of the writers headed by Du Bos, who looked upon art as a mere pastime, like a tournament or a bull-fight, shows that the truth about Æsthetic had not yet succeeded in emerging from the other spiritual activities. Yet the new words and the new views of the seventeenth century have great importance for the origins of Æsthetic; they were the direct result of the restatement of the problem by the writers of the Renaissance, who themselves took it up where Antiquity had left it. These new words, and the discussions which arose from them, were the demands of Æsthetic for its theoretical justification. But they were not able to provide this justification, and it could not come from elsewhere.

With Descartes, we are not likely to find much sympathy for such studies as relate to wit, taste, fancy, or feelings. He ignored the famous *non so che*; he abhorred the imagination, which he believed to result from the agitation of the animal spirits. He did not

altogether condemn poetry, but certainly looked upon it as the *folle du logis*, which must be strictly supervised by the reason. Boileau is the æsthetic equivalent of Cartesian intellectualism, Boileau *que la raison à ses règles engage*, Boileau the enthusiast for allegory. France was infected with the mathematical spirit of Cartesianism and all possibility of a serious consideration of poetry and of art was thus removed. Witness the diatribes of Malebranche against the imagination, and listen to the Italian, Antonio Conti, writing from France in 1756 on the theme of the literary disputes that were raging at the time: "They have introduced the method of M. Descartes into belles-lettres; they judge poetry and eloquence independently of their sensible qualities. Thus they also confound the progress of philosophy with that of the arts. The Abbé Terrasson says that the moderns are greater geometricians than the ancients; therefore they are greater orators and greater poets." La Motte, Fontenelle, Boileau, and Malebranche carried on this battle, which was taken up by the Encyclopædists, and when Du Bos published his daring book, Jean Jacques le Bel published a reply to it (1726), in which he denied to sentiment its claim to judge of art. Thus Cartesianism could not possess an Æsthetic of the imagination. The Cartesian J. P. de Crousaz (1715) found the beautiful to consist in what is approved of, and thereby reduced it to ideas, ignoring the pleasing and sentiment.

Locke was as intellectualist in the England of this period as was Descartes in France. He speaks of wit as combining ideas in an agreeable variety, which strikes the imagination, while the intellect or

judgment seeks for differences according to truth. The wit, then, consists of something which is not at all in accordance with truth and reason. For Shaftesbury, taste is a sense or instinct of the beautiful, of order and proportion, identical with the moral sense and with its "preconceptions" anticipating the recognition of reason. Body, spirit, and God are the three degrees of beauty. Francis Hutcheson proceeded from Shaftesbury and made popular "the internal sense of beauty, which lies somewhere between sensuality and rationality and is occupied with discussing unity in variety, concord in multiplicity, and the true, the good, and the beautiful in their substantial identity." Hutcheson allied the pleasure of art with this sense, that is, with the pleasure of imitation and of the likeness of the copy to the original. This he looked upon as relative beauty, to be distinguished from absolute beauty. The same view dominates the English writers of the eighteenth century, among whom may be mentioned Reid, the head of the Scottish school, and Adam Smith.

With far greater philosophical vigour, Leibnitz in Germany opened the door to that crowd of psychic facts which Cartesian intellectualism had rejected with horror. His conception of reality as *continuous* (*natura non facit saltus*) left room for imagination, taste, and their congeners. Leibnitz believed that the scale of being ascended from the lowliest to God. What we now term æsthetic facts were then identified with what Descartes and Leibnitz had called "confused" knowledge, which might become "clear," but not distinct. It might seem that when he applied this terminology to æsthetic facts, Leibnitz had recognized

their peculiar essence, as being neither sensual nor intellectual. They are not sensual for him, because they have their own "clarity," differing from pleasure and sensual emotion, and from intellectual "distinctio." But the Leibnitzian law of continuity and intellectualism did not permit of such an interpretation. Obscurity and clarity are here to be understood as quantitative grades of a *single* form of knowledge, the distinct or intellectual, toward which they both tend and reach at a superior grade. Though artists judge with confused perceptions, which are clear but not distinct, these may yet be corrected and proved true by intellective knowledge. The intellect clearly and distinctly knows the thing which the imagination knows confusedly but clearly. This view of Leibnitz amounts to saying that the realization of a work of art can be perfected by intellectually determining its concept. Thus Leibnitz held that there was only one true form of knowledge, and that all other forms could only reach perfection in that. His "clarity" is not a specific difference; it is merely a partial anticipation of his intellective "distinction." To have posited this grade is an important achievement, but the view of Leibnitz is not fundamentally different from that of the creators of the words and intuitions already studied. All contributed to attract attention to the peculiarity of æsthetic facts.

Speculation on language at this period revealed an equally determined intellectualist attitude. Grammar was held to be an exact science, and grammatical variations to be explainable by the ellipse, by abbreviation, and by failure to grasp the typical logical form. In France, with Arnauld (1660), we have the rigorous

Cartesian intellectualism; Leibnitz and Locke both speculated upon this subject, and the former all his life nourished the thought of a universal language. The absurdity of this is proved in this volume.

A complete change of the Cartesian system, upon which Leibnitz based his own, was necessary, if speculation were ever to surpass the Leibnitzian æsthetic. But Wolff and the other German pupils of Leibnitz were as unable to shake themselves free of the all-pervading intellectualism as were the French pupils of Descartes.

Meanwhile a young student of Berlin, named Alexander Amedeus Baumgarten, was studying the Wolffian philosophy, and at the same time lecturing in poetry and Latin rhetoric. While so doing, he was led to rethink and pose afresh the problem of how to reduce the precepts of rhetoric to a rigorous philosophical system. Thus it came about that Baumgarten published in September 1735, at the age of twenty-one, as the thesis for his degree of Doctor, an opuscule entitled, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poëma pertinentibus*, and in it we find written *for the first time* the word "Æsthetic," as the name of a special science. Baumgarten ever afterwards attached great importance to his juvenile discovery, and lectured upon it by request in 1742, at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and again in 1749. It is interesting to know that in this way Emmanuel Kant first became acquainted with the theory of Æsthetic, which he greatly altered when he came to treat of it in his philosophy. In 1750, Baumgarten published the first volume of a more ample treatise, and a second part in 1762. But illness, and death in 1762, prevented his completing his work.

What is Æsthetic for Baumgarten? It is the science of sensible knowledge. Its objects are the sensible facts (*αἰσθητά*), which the Greeks were always careful to distinguish from the mental facts (*νοητά*). It is therefore *scientia cognitionis sensitivae, theoria liberalium artium, gnoseologia inferior, ars pulcre cogitandi, ars analogi rationis.* Rhetoric and Poetic are for him special cases of Æsthetic, which is a general science, embracing both. Its laws are diffused among all the arts, like the mariner's star (*cynosura quaedam*), and they must be always referred to in all cases, for they are universal, not empirical or merely inductive (*falsa regula pejor est quam nulla*). Æsthetic must not be confounded with Psychology, which supplies only suppositions. Æsthetic is an independent science, which gives the rules for knowing sensibly, and is occupied with the perfection of sensible knowledge, which is beauty. Its contrary is ugliness. The beauty of objects and of matter must be excluded from the beauty of sensible knowledge, because beautiful objects can be badly thought and ugly objects beautifully thought. Poetic representations are those which are confused or imaginative. Distinction and intellectuality are not poetic. The greater the determination, the greater the poetry; individuals absolutely determined (*omnimodo determinata*) are very poetical, as are images or fancies, and everything which refers to feeling. The judgment of sensible and imaginative representations is taste.

Such are, in brief, the truths which Baumgarten stated in his *Meditationes*, and further developed and exemplified in his *Aesthetica.* Close study of the two works above-mentioned leads to the conviction that

Baumgarten did not succeed in freeing himself from the unity of the Leibnitzian monadology. He obtained from Leibnitz his conception of the poetic as consisting of the confused, but German critics are wrong in believing that he attributed to it a positive, not a negative quality. Had he really done this, he would have broken at a blow the unity of the Leibnitzian monad, and conquered the science of Æsthetic.

This giant's step he did not take: he failed to banish the contradictions of Leibnitz and of the other intellectualists. To posit a *perfection* did not suffice. It was necessary to maintain it against the *lex continui* of Leibnitz and to proclaim its independence of all intellectualism. Æsthetic truths for Baumgarten were those which did not seem altogether false or altogether true: in fact, the verisimilar. If it were objected to Baumgarten that one should not occupy oneself with what, like poetry, he defines as confused and obscure, he would reply that confusion is a condition of finding the truth, that we do not pass at once from night to dawn. Thus he did not surpass the thought of Leibnitz in this respect. Poor Baumgarten was always in suspense lest he should be held to occupy himself with things unworthy of a philosopher! "How can you, a professor of philosophy, dare to praise lying and the mixture of truth and falsehood?" He imagined that some such reproach might be addressed to him on account of his purely philosophical speculations, and true enough he actually received a criticism of his theory, in which it was argued, that if poetry consisted of sensual perfection, then it was a bad thing for mankind. Baumgarten contemptuously replied that he had not the time to argue with those capable of confounding

his *oratio perfecta sensitiva* with an *oratio perfecte* (*omnino*!) *sensitiva.*

The fact about Baumgarten is that apart from baptizing the new science Æsthetic, and apart from his first definitions, he does not stray far from the old ruts of scholastic thought. The excellent Baumgarten, with all his ardour and all his convictions, is a sympathetic and interesting figure in the history of Æsthetic not yet formed, but in process of formation.

The revolutionary who set aside the old definitions of Æsthetic, and for the first time revealed the true nature of art and poetry, is the Italian, Giambattista Vico.

What were the ideas developed by Vico in his *Scienza nuova* (1725)? They were neither more nor less than the solution of the problem, posed by Plato, attempted in vain by Aristotle, again posed and again unsolved at the Renaissance.

Is poetry a rational or an irrational thing? Is it spiritual or animal? If it be spiritual, what is its true nature, and in what way does it differ from art and science?

Plato, we know, banished poetry to the inferior region of the soul, among the animal spirits. Vico on the contrary raises up poetry, and makes of it a period in the history of humanity. And since Vico's is an ideal history, whose periods are not concerned with contingent facts, but with spiritual forms, he makes of it a moment of the ideal history of the spirit, a form of knowledge. Poetry comes before the intellect, but *after* feeling. Plato had *confused* it with feeling, and for that reason banished it from his Republic. "Men *feel*," says Vico, "before observing, then they observe

with perturbation of the soul, finally they reflect with the pure intellect." He goes on to say, that poetry being composed of passion and of feeling, the nearer it approaches to the *particular*, the more *true* it is, while exactly the reverse is true of philosophy.

Imagination is independent and autonomous as regards the intellect. Not only does the intellect fail of perfection, but all it can do is to destroy it. "The studies of Poetry and Metaphysic are *naturally opposed.* Poets are the feeling, philosophers the intellect of the human race." The weaker the reason, the stronger the imagination. Philosophy, he says, deals with abstract thought or universals, poetry with the particular. Painters and poets differ only in their material. Homer and the great poets appear in barbaric times. Dante, for instance, appeared in "the renewed barbarism of Italy." The poetic ages preceded the philosophical, and poetry is the father of prose, by "necessity of nature," not by the "caprice of pleasure." Fables or "imaginary universals" were conceived before "reasoned or philosophical universals." To Homer, says Vico, belongs wisdom, but only poetic wisdom. "His beauties are not those of a spirit softened and civilized by any philosophy."

If any one make poetry in epochs of reflexion, he becomes a child again; he does not reflect with his intellect, but follows his fancy and dwells upon particulars. If the true poet make use of philosophic ideas, he only does so that he may change logic into imagination.

Here we have a profound statement of the line of demarcation between science and art. *They cannot be confused again.*

His statement of the difference between poetry and history is a trifle less clear. He explains why to Aristotle poetry seemed more philosophical than history, and at the same time he refutes Aristotle's error that poetry deals with the universal, history with the particular. Poetry equals science, not because it is occupied with the intellectual concept, but because, like science, it is ideal. A good poetical fable must be all ideal: "With the idea the poet gives their being to things which are without it. Poetry is all fantastic, as being the art of painting the idea, not icastic, like the art of painting portraits. That is why poets, like painters, are called divine, because in that respect they resemble God the Creator." Vico ends by identifying poetry and history. The difference between them is posterior and accidental. "But, as it is impossible to impart false ideas, because the false consists of a vicious combination of ideas, so it is impossible to impart a tradition, which, though it be false, has not at first contained some element of truth. Thus mythology appears for the first time, not as the invention of an individual, but as the spontaneous vision of the truth as it appears to primitive man."

Poetry and language are for Vico substantially identical. He finds in the origins of poetry the origins of languages and letters. He believed that the first languages consisted in mute acts or acts accompanied by bodies which had natural relations to the ideas that it was desired to signify. With great cleverness he compared these pictured languages to heraldic arms and devices, and to hieroglyphs. He observed that during the barbarism of the Middle Age, the mute

language of signs must return, and we find it in the heraldry and blazonry of that epoch. Hence come three kinds of languages: divine silent languages, heroic emblematic languages, and speech languages.

Formal logic could never satisfy a man with such revolutionary ideas upon poetry and language. He describes the Aristotelian syllogism as a method which explains universals in their particulars, rather than unites particulars to obtain universals, looks upon Zeno and the sorites as a means of subtilizing rather than sharpening the intelligence, and concludes that Bacon is a great philosopher, when he advocates and illustrates *induction*, "which has been followed by the English to the great advantage of experimental philosophy." Hence he proceeds to criticize mathematics, which had hitherto always been looked upon as the type of the *perfect science.*

Vico is indeed a revolutionary, a pioneer. He knows very well that he is in direct opposition to all that has been thought before about poetry. "My new principles of poetry upset all that first Plato and then Aristotle have said about the origin of poetry, all that has been said by the Patrizzi, by the Scaligers, and by the Castelvetri. I have discovered that it was through lack of human reason that poetry was born so sublime that neither the Arts, nor the Poetics, nor the Critiques could cause another equal to it to be born, I say equal, and not superior." He goes as far as to express shame at having to report the stupidities of great philosophers upon the origin of song and verse. He shows his dislike for the Cartesian philosophy and its tendency to dry up the imagination "by denying all the faculties of the soul which come to it from the body," and

talks of his own time as of one "which freezes all the generous quality of the best poetry and thus precludes it from being understood."

As regards grammatical forms, Vico may be described as an adherent of the great reaction of the Renaissance against scholastic verbalism and formalism. This reaction brought back as a value the experience of feeling, and afterwards with Romanticism gave its right place to the imagination. Vico, in his *Scienza nuova*, may be said to have been the first to draw attention to the imagination. Although he makes many luminous remarks on history and the development of poetry among the Greeks, his work is not really a history, but a science of the spirit or of the ideal. It is not the ethical, logical, or economic moment of humanity which interests him, but the *imaginative* moment. *He discovered the creative imagination*, and it may almost be said of the *Scienza nuova* of Vico that it is Æsthetic, the discovery of a new world, of a new mode of knowledge.

This was the contribution of the genius of Vico to the progress of humanity: he showed Æsthetic to be an autonomous activity. It remained to distinguish the science of the spirit from history, the modifications of the human spirit from the historic vicissitudes of peoples, Æsthetic from Homeric civilization.

But although Goethe, Herder, and Wolf were acquainted with the *Scienza nuova*, the importance of this wonderful book did not at first dawn upon the world. Wolf, in his prolegomena to Homer, thought that he was dealing merely with an ingenious speculator on Homeric themes. He did not realize

that the intellectual stature of Vico far surpassed that of the most able philologists.

The fortunes of Æsthetic after Vico were very various, and the list of æstheticians who fell back into the old pedagogic definition, or elaborated the mistakes of Baumgarten, is very long. Yet with C. H. Heydenreich in Germany and Sulzer in Switzerland we find that the truths contained in Baumgarten have begun to bear fruit. J. J. Herder (1769) was more important than these, and he placed Baumgarten upon a pedestal, though criticizing his pretension of creating an *ars pulchre cogitandi* instead of a simple *scientia de pulchro et pulchris philosophice cogitans.* Herder admitted Baumgarten's definition of poetry as *oratio sensitiva perfecta,* perfect sensitived speech, and this is *probably the best definition of poetry that has ever been given.* It touches the real essence of poetry and opens to thought the whole of the philosophy of the beautiful. Herder, although he does not cite Vico upon æsthetic questions, yet praises him as a philosopher. His remarks about poetry as "the maternal language of humanity, as the garden is more ancient than the cultivated field, painting than writing, song than declamation, exchange than commerce," are replete with the spirit of the Italian philosopher.

But despite similar happy phrases, Herder is philosophically the inferior of the great Italian. He is a firm believer in the Leibnitzian law of continuity, and does not surpass the conclusions of Baumgarten.

Herder and his friend Hamann did good service as regards the philosophy of language. The French encyclopædists, J. J. Rousseau, d'Alembert, and many

others of this period, were none of them able to get free of the idea that a word is either a natural, mechanical fact, or a sign attached to a thought. The only way out of this difficulty is to look upon the imagination as itself active and expressive in *verbal imagination*, and language as the language of *intuition*, not of the intelligence. Herder talks of language as "an understanding of the soul with itself." Thus language begins to appear, not as an arbitrary invention or a mechanical fact, but as a primitive affirmation of human activity, as a *creation*.

But all unconscious of the discoveries of Vico, the great mass of eighteenth century writers try their hands at every sort of solution. The Abbé Batteux published in 1746 *Les Beaux-arts réduits à un seul principe*, which is a perfect little bouquet of contradictions. The Abbé finds himself confronted with difficulties at every turn, but with "un peu d'esprit on se tire de tout," and when for instance he has to explain artistic enjoyment of things displeasing, he remarks that the imitation never being perfect like reality, the horror caused by reality disappears.

But the French were equalled and indeed surpassed by the English in their amateur Æsthetics. The painter Hogarth was one day reading in Italian a speech about the beauty of certain figures, attributed to Michael Angelo. This led him to imagine that the figurative arts depend upon a principle which consists of conforming to a given line. In 1745 he produced a serpentine line as frontispiece of his collection of engravings, which he described as "the line of beauty." Thus he succeeded in exciting universal curiosity, which he proceeded to satisfy with his

"Analysis of Beauty." Here he begins by rightly combating the error of judging paintings by their subject and by the degree of their imitation, instead of by their form, which is the essential in art. He gives his definition of form, and afterwards proceeds to describe the waving lines which are beautiful and those which are not, and maintains that among them all there is but one that is really worthy to be called "the line of beauty," and one definite serpentine line "the line of grace." The pig, the bear, the spider, and the frog are ugly, because they do not possess serpentine lines. E. Burke, with a like assurance in his examples, was equally devoid of certainty in his general principles. He declares that the natural properties of an object cause pleasure or pain to the imagination, but that the latter also procures pleasure from their resemblance to the original. He does not speak further of the second of these, but gives a long list of the natural properties of the sensible, beautiful object. Having concluded his list, he remarks that these are in his opinion the qualities upon which beauty depends and which are the least liable to caprice and confusion. But "comparative smallness, delicate structure, colouring vivid but not too much so," are all mere empirical observations of no more value than those of Hogarth, with whom Burke must be classed as an æsthetician. Their works are spoken of as "classics." Classics indeed they are, but of the sort that arrive at no conclusion.

Henry Home (Lord Kaimes) is on a level a trifle above the two just mentioned. He seeks "the true principles of the beaux-arts," in order to transform criticism into "a rational science." He selects facts

and experience for this purpose, but in his definition of beauty, which he divides into two parts, relative and intrinsic, he is unable to explain the latter, save by a final cause, which he finds in the Almighty.

Such theories as the three above mentioned defy classification, because they are not composed by any scientific method. Their authors pass from physiological sensualism to moralism, from imitation of nature to finalism, and to transcendental mysticism, without consciousness of the incongruity of their theses, at variance each with itself.

The German, Ernest Platner, at any rate did not suffer from a like confusion of thought. He developed his researches on the lines of Hogarth, but was only able to discover a prolongation of sexual pleasure in æsthetic facts. "Where," he exclaims, "is there any beauty that does not come from the feminine figure, the centre of all beauty? The undulating line is beautiful, because it is found in the body of woman; essentially feminine movements are beautiful; the notes of music are beautiful, when they melt into one another; a poem is beautiful, when one thought embraces another with lightness and facility."

French sensualism shows itself quite incapable of understanding æsthetic production, and the associationism of David Hume is not more fortunate in this respect.

The Dutchman Hemsterhuis (1769) developed an ingenious theory, mingling mystical and sensualist theory with some just remarks, which afterwards, in the hands of Jacobi, became sentimentalism. Hemsterhuis believed beauty to be a phenomenon arising from the meeting by the sentimentalism, which

gives multiplicity, with the internal sense, which tends to unity. Consequently the beautiful will be that which presents the greatest number of ideas in the shortest space of time. To man is denied supreme unity, but here he finds approximative unity. Hence the joy arising from the beautiful, which has some analogy with the joy of love.

With Winckelmann (1764) Platonism or Neoplatonism was vigorously renewed. The creator of the history of the figurative arts saw in the divine indifference and more than human elevation of the works of Greek sculpture a beauty which had descended from the seventh heaven and become incarnate in them. Mendelssohn, the follower of Baumgarten, had denied beauty to God: Winckelmann, the Neoplatonician, gave it back to Him. He holds that perfect beauty is to be found only in God. "The conception of human beauty becomes the more perfect in proportion as it can be thought as in agreement with the Supreme Being, who is distinguished from matter by His unity and indivisibility." To the other characteristics of supreme beauty, Winckelmann adds "the absence of any sort of signification" (Unbezeichnung). Lines and dots cannot explain beauty, for it is not they alone which form it. Its form is not proper to any definite person, it expresses no sentiment, no feeling of passion, for these break up unity and diminish or obscure beauty. According to Winckelmann, beauty must be like a drop of pure water taken from the spring, which is the more healthy the less it has of taste, because it is purified of all foreign elements.

A special faculty is required to appreciate this beauty, which Winckelmann is inclined to call in-

telligence, or a delicate internal sense, free of all instinctive passions, of pleasure, and of friendship. Since it becomes a question of perceiving something immaterial, Winckelmann banishes colour to a secondary place. True beauty, he says, is that of form, a word which describes lines and contours, as though lines and contours could not also be perceived by the senses, or could appear to the eye without any colour.

It is the destiny of error to be obliged to contradict itself, when it does not decide to dwell in a brief aphorism, in order to live as well as may be with facts and concrete problems. The "History" of Winckelmann dealt with historic concrete facts, with which it was necessary to reconcile the idea of a supreme beauty. His admission of the contours of lines and his secondary admission of colours is a compromise. He makes another with regard to the principle of expression. "Since there is no intermediary between pain and pleasure in human nature, and since a human being without these feelings is inconceivable, we must place the human figure in a moment of action and of passion, which is what is termed expression in art." So Winckelmann studied expression after beauty. He makes a third compromise between his one, indivisible, supreme, and constant beauty and individual beauties. Winckelmann preferred the male to the female body as the most complete incarnation of supreme beauty, but he was not able to shut his eyes to the indisputable fact that there also exist beautiful bodies of women and even of animals.

Raphael Mengs, the painter, was an intimate friend of Winckelmann and associated himself with him in

his search for a true definition of the beautiful. His ideas were generally in accordance with those of Winckelmann. He defines beauty as "the visible idea of perfection, which is to perfection what the visible is to the mathematical point." He falls under the influence of the argument from design. The Creator has ordained the multiplicity of beauties. Things are beautiful according to our ideas of them, and these ideas come from the Creator. Thus each beautiful thing has its own type, and a child would appear ugly if it resembled a man. He adds to his remarks in this sense: "As the diamond is alone perfect among stones, gold among metals, and man among living creatures, so there is distinction in each species, and but little is perfect." In his *Dreams of Beauty*, he looks upon beauty as "an intermediate disposition," which contains a part of perfection and a part of the agreeable, and forms a *tertium quid*, which differs from the other two and deserves a special name. He names four sources of the art of painting: beauty, significant or expressive character, harmony, and colouring. The first of these he finds among the ancients, the second with Raphael, the third with Correggio, the fourth with Titian. Mengs does not succeed in rising above this empiricism of the studio, save to declaim about the beauty of nature, virtue, forms, and proportions, and indeed everything, including the First Cause, which is the most beautiful of all.

The name of G. E. Lessing (1766) is well known to all concerned with art problems. The ideas of Winckelmann reappear in Lessing, with less of a metaphysical tinge. For Lessing, the end of art is the pleasing, and since this is "a superfluous thing," he

thought that the legislator should not allow to art the liberty indispensable to science, which seeks the truth, necessary to the soul. For the Greeks painting was, as it should always be, "imitation of beautiful bodies." Everything disagreeable or ill-formed should be excluded from painting. "Painting, as clever imitation, may imitate deformity. Painting, as a fine art, does not permit this." He was more inclined to admit deformity in poetry, as there it is less shocking, and the poet can make use of it to produce in us certain feelings, such as the ridiculous or the terrible. In his *Dramaturgie* (1767), Lessing followed the Peripatetics, and believed that the rules of Aristotle were as absolute as the theorems of Euclid. His polemic against the French school is chiefly directed to claiming a place in poetry for the verisimilar, as against absolute historical exactitude. He held the universal to be a sort of mean of what appears in the individual, the catharsis was in his view a transformation of the passions into virtuous dispositions, and he held the duty of poetry to be inspiration of the love of virtue. He followed Winckelmann in believing that the expression of physical beauty was the supreme object of painting. This beauty exists only as an ideal, which finds its highest expression in man. Animals possess it to a slighter extent, vegetable and inanimate nature not at all. Those mistaken enough to occupy themselves with depicting the latter are imitating beauties deprived of all ideal. They work only with eye and hand; genius has little if any share in their productions. Lessing found the physical ideal to reside chiefly in form, but also in the ideal of colour, and in permanent expression. Mere colouring and

transitory expression were for him without ideal, "because nature has not imposed upon herself anything definite as regards them." At bottom he does not care for colouring, finding in the pen drawings of artists "a life, a liberty, a delicacy, lacking to their pictures." He asks "whether even the most wonderful colouring can make up for such a loss, and whether it be not desirable that the art of oil-painting had never been invented."

This "ideal beauty," wonderfully constructed from divine quintessence and subtle pen and brush strokes, this academic mystery, had great success. In Italy it was much discussed in the environment of Mengs and of Winckelmann, who were working there.

The first counterblast to their æsthetic Neo-platonism came from an Italian named Spalletti, and took the form of a letter addressed to Mengs. He represents the *characteristic* as the true principle of art. The pleasure obtained from beauty is intellectual, and truth is its object. When the soul meets with what is characteristic, and what really suits the object to be represented, the work is held to be beautiful. A well-made man with a woman's face is ugly. Harmony, order, variety, proportion, etc.—these are elements of beauty, and man enjoys the widening of his knowledge before disagreeable things characteristically represented. Spalletti defines beauty as "that modification inherent to the object observed, which presents it, as it should appear, with an infallible characteristic."

Thus the Aristotelian thesis found a supporter in Italy, some years before any protestation was heard in Germany. Louis Hirt, the historian of art (1797) observed that ancient monuments represented all sorts

of forms, from the most beautiful and sublime to the most ugly and most common. He therefore denied that ideal beauty was the principle of art, and for it substituted the *characteristic*, applicable equally to gods, heroes, and animals.

Wolfgang Goethe, in 1798, forgetting the juvenile period, during which he had dared to raise a hymn to Gothic architecture, now began seriously to seek a middle term between beauty and expression. He believed that he had found it, in certain characteristic contents presenting to the artist beautiful shapes, which the artist would then develop and reduce to perfect beauty. Thus for Goethe at this period, the characteristic was simply the *starting-point*, or framework, from which the beautiful arose, through the power of the artist.

But these writers mentioned after J. B. Vico are not true philosophers. Winckelmann, Mengs, Hogarth, Lessing, and Goethe are great in other ways. Meier called himself a historian of art, but he was inferior both to Herder and to Hamann. From J. B. Vico to Emmanuel Kant, European thought is without a name of great importance as regards this subject.

Kant took up the problem, where Vico had left it, not in the historical, but in the ideal sense. He resembled the Italian philosopher, in the gravity and the tenacity of his studies in Æsthetic, but he was far less happy in his solutions, which did not attain to the truth, and to which he did not succeed in giving the necessary unity and systematization. The reader must bear in mind that Kant is here criticized solely as an æsthetician: his other conclusions do not enter directly into the discussion.

What was Kant's idea of art? The answer is: the

same in substance as Baumgarten's. This may seem strange to those who remember his sustained polemic against Wolf and the conception of beauty as confused perception. But Kant always thought highly of Baumgarten. He calls him "that excellent analyst" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and he used Baumgarten's text for his University lectures on Metaphysic. Kant looked upon Logic and Æsthetic as cognate studies, and in his scheme of studies for 1765, and in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he proposes to cast a glance at the Critique of Taste, that is to say, Æsthetic, "since the study of the one is useful for the other and they are mutually illuminative." He followed Meier in his distinctions between logical and æsthetic truth. He even quoted the instance of the young girl, whose face when distinctly seen, *i.e.* with a microscope, is no longer beautiful. It is true, æsthetically, he said, that when a man is dead he cannot come to life, although this be opposed both to logical and to moral truth. It is æsthetically true that the sun plunges into the sea, although that is not true logically or objectively.

No one, even among the greatest, can yet tell to what extent logical truth should mingle with æsthetic truth. Kant believed that logical truth must wear the habit of Æsthetic, in order to become *accessible*. This habit, he thought, was discarded only by the rational sciences, which tend to depth. Æsthetic certainly is subjective. It is satisfied with authority or with an appeal to great men. We are so feeble that Æsthetic must eke out our thoughts. Æsthetic is a vehicle of Logic. But there are logical truths which are not æsthetic. We must exclude from philosophy exclamations and other emotions, which belong to æsthetic

truth. For Kant, poetry is the harmonious play of thought and sensation, differing from eloquence, because in poetry thoughts are fitted to suggestions, in eloquence the reverse is true. Poetry should make virtue and intellect visible, as was done by Pope in his *Essay on Man.* Elsewhere, he says frankly that logical perfection is the foundation of all the rest.

The confirmation of this is found in his *Critique of Judgment*, which Schelling looked upon as the most important of the three *Critiques*, and which Hegel and other metaphysical idealists always especially esteemed.

For Kant art was always "a sensible and imaged covering for an intellectual concept." He did not look upon art as pure beauty without a concept. He looked upon it as a beauty adherent and fixed about a concept. The work of genius contains two elements: imagination and intelligence. To these must be added taste, which combines the two. Art may even represent the ugly in nature, for artistic beauty "is not a beautiful thing but a beautiful representation of a thing." But this representation of the ugly has its limits in the arts (here Kant remembers Lessing and Winckelmann), and an absolute limit in the disgusting and the repugnant, which kills the representation itself. He believes that there may be artistic productions without a concept, such as are flowers in nature, and these would be ornaments to frameworks, music without words, etc., etc., but since they represent nothing reducible to a definite concept, they must be classed, like flowers, with free beauties. This would certainly seem to exclude them from Æsthetic, which, according to Kant, should combine imagination and intelligence.

Kant is shut in with intellectualist barriers. A complete definition of the *imagination* is *wanting* to his system. He does not admit that the imagination belongs to the powers of the mind. He relegates it to the facts of sensation. He is aware of the reproductive and combinative imagination, but he does not recognize *fancy* (*fantasia*), which is the true productive imagination.

Yet Kant was aware that there exists an activity other than the intellective. Intuition is referred to by him as preceding intellective activity and differing from sensation. He does not speak of it, however, in his critique of art, but in the first section of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* Sensations do not enter the mind, until it has given them *form.* This is neither sensation nor intelligence. It is *pure intuition,* the sum of the *a priori* principles of sensibility. He speaks thus: "There must, then, exist a science that forms the first part of the transcendental doctrine of the elements, distinct from that which contains the principles of pure thought and is called transcendental Logic."

What does he call this new science? He calls it *Transcendental Æsthetic,* and refuses to allow the term to be used for the Critique of Taste, which could never become a science.

But although he thus states so clearly the necessity of a science of the form of the sensations, that is of *pure intuition,* Kant here appears to fall into grave error. This arises from *his inexact idea* of the *essence of the æsthetic faculty or of art,* which, as we now know, is pure intuition. He conceives the form of sensibility to be reducible to the *two categories of space and time.*

Benedetto Croce has shown that space and time are far from being categories or functions: they are complex posterior formations. Kant, however, looked upon density, colour, etc., as material for sensations; but the mind only observes colour or hardness when it has *already* given a form to its sensations. Sensations, in so far as they are *crude matter*, are *outside* the mind: they are a *limit.* Colour, hardness, density, etc., are *already* intuitions. *They are the æsthetic activity in its rudimentary manifestation.*

Characterizing or qualifying imagination, that is, *æsthetic activity*, should therefore *take the place occupied by the study of space and time* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and constitute the true *Transcendental Æsthetic*, prologue to Logic.

Had Kant done this, he would have surpassed Leibnitz and Baumgarten; he would have equalled Vico.

Kant did not identify the Beautiful with art. He established what he called "the four moments of Beauty," amounting to a definition of it. The two negative moments are, "That is beautiful which pleases *without interest*"; this thesis was directed against the sensualist school of English writers, with whom Kant had for a time agreed; and "That is beautiful which pleases without a concept," directed against the intellectualists. Thus he affirmed the existence of a spiritual domain, distinct from that of organic pleasure, of the useful, the good, and the true. The two other moments are, "That is beautiful which has the form of finality without the representation of an end," and "That is beautiful which is the object

of universal pleasure." What is this disinterested pleasure that we experience before pure colours, pure sounds, and flowers? Benedetto Croce replies that this mysterious domain has no existence; that the instances cited represent, either instances of organic pleasure, or are artistic facts of expression.

Kant was less severe with the Neoplatonicians than with the two schools of thought above mentioned. His *Critique of Judgment* contains some curious passages, in one of which he gives his distinction of form from matter: "In music, the melody is the matter, harmony the form: in a flower, the scent is the matter, the shape or configuration the form." In the other arts, he found that the design was the essential. "Not what pleases in sensation, but what is approved for its form, is the foundation of taste."

In his pursuit of the phantom of a beauty, which is neither that of art nor of sensual pleasure, exempt alike from expression and from enjoyment, he became enveloped in inextricable contradictions. Little disposed as he was to let himself be carried away by the imagination, he expressed his contempt for philosopher-poets like Herder, and kept saying and unsaying, affirming and then immediately criticizing his own affirmations as to this mysterious beauty. The truth is that *this mystery is simply his own individual uncertainty before a problem which he could not solve*, owing to his having no clear idea of an activity of sentiment. Such an activity represented for him a logical contradiction. Such expressions as "necessary universal pleasure," "finality without the idea of end," are verbal proofs of his uncertainty.

How was he to emerge from this uncertainty, this

contradiction? He fell back upon the concept of a base of subjective finality as the base of the judgment of taste, that is of the subjective finality of nature by the judgment. But nothing can be known or disclosed to the object by means of this concept, which is indeterminate in itself and not adapted for knowledge. Its determining reason is perhaps situated in "the suprasensible substratum of humanity." Thus beauty becomes a symbol of morality. "The subjective principle alone, that is, the indeterminate idea of the suprasensible in us, can be indicated as the sole key to reveal this faculty, which remains unknown to us in its origin. Nothing but this principle can make that hidden faculty comprehensible."

Kant had a tendency to mysticism, which this statement does not serve to conceal, but it was a mysticism without enthusiasm, a mysticism almost against the grain. His failure to penetrate thoroughly the nature of the æsthetic activity led him to see double and even triple, on several occasions. Art being unknown to him in its essential nature, he invents the functions of *space* and *time* and terms this *transcendental æsthetic*; he develops the theory of the imaginative beautifying of the intellectual concept by genius; he is finally forced to admit a mysterious power of feeling, intermediate between the theoretic and the practical activity. This power is cognoscitive and non-cognoscitive, moral and indifferent to morality, agreeable and yet detached from the pleasure of the senses. His successors hastened to make use of this mysterious power, for they were glad to be able to find some sort of justification for their bold speculations in the severe philosopher of Königsberg.

In addition to Schelling and Hegel, for whom, as has been said, the *Critique of Judgment* seemed the most important of the three Critiques, we must now mention the name of a poet who showed himself as great in philosophical as in æsthetic achievement.

Friedrich Schiller first elaborated that portion of the Kantian thought contained in the *Critique of Judgment.* Before any professional philosopher, Schiller studied that sphere of activity which unites feeling with reason. Hegel talks with admiration of this artistic genius, who was also so profoundly philosophical and first announced the principle of reconciliation between life as duty and reason on the one hand, and the life of the senses and feeling on the other.

To Schiller belongs the great merit of having opposed the subjective idealism of Kant and of having made the attempt to surpass it.

The exact relations between Kant and Schiller, and the extent to which the latter may have been influenced by Leibnitz and Herder, are of less importance to the history of Æsthetic than the fact that Schiller *unified* once for all art and beauty, which had been separated by Kant, with his distinctions between adherent and pure beauty. Schiller's artistic sense must doubtless have stood him here in good stead.

Schiller found a very unfortunate and misleading term to apply to the æsthetic sphere. He called it the sphere of *play* (Spiel). He strove to explain that by this he did not mean ordinary games, nor material amusement. For Schiller, this sphere of play lay intermediate between thought and feeling. Necessity

in art gives place to a free disposition of forces; mind and nature, matter and form are here reconciled. The beautiful is life, but not physiological life. A beautiful statue may have life, and a living man be without it. Art conquers nature with form. The great artist effaces matter with form. The less we are sensible of the material in a work of art, the greater the triumph of the artist. The soul of the spectator should leave the magic sphere of art as pure and as perfect as when it left the hands of the Creator. The most frivolous theme should be so treated that we can pass at once from it to the most rigorous, and *vice versa*. Only when man has placed himself outside the world and contemplates it æsthetically, can he know the world. While he is merely the passive receiver of sensations, he is one with the world, and therefore cannot realize it. Art is indeterminism. With the help of art, man delivers himself from the yoke of the senses, and is at the same time free of any rational or moral duty: he may enjoy for a moment the luxury of serene contemplation.

Schiller was well aware that the moment art is employed to teach morals directly, it ceases to be art. All other teachings give to the soul a special imprint. Art alone is favourable to all without prejudice. Owing to this indifference of art, it possesses a great educative power, by opening the path to morality without preaching or persuasion; without determining, it produces determinability. This was the main theme of the celebrated "Letters on the Æsthetic Education of Man," which Schiller wrote to his patron the Duke of Holstein-Augustenburg. Here, and in his lectures at the University of Jena, it

is clear that Schiller addresses himself to a popular audience. He began a work, on scientific Æsthetic, which he intended to entitle "Kallias," but unfortunately died without completing it. We possess only a few fragments, contained in his correspondence with his friend Körner. Körner did not feel satisfied with the formula of Schiller, and asks for some more precise and objective mark of the beautiful. Schiller tells him that he has found it, but what he had found we shall never know, as there is no document to inform us.

The fault of Schiller's æsthetic theory was its lack of precision. His artistic faculty enabled him to give unsurpassable descriptions of the catharsis and of other effects of art, but he fails to give a precise definition of the æsthetic function. True, he disassociates it from morality, yet admits that it may in a measure be associated with it. The only formal activities that he recognizes are the moral and the intellectual, and he denies altogether (against the sensualists) that art can have anything to do with passion or sensuality. His intellectual world consisted only of the logical and the intellectual, leaving out the imaginative activity.

What is art for Schiller? He admits four modes of relation between man and external things. They are the physical, the logical, the moral, and the æsthetic. He describes this latter as a mode by which things affect the whole of our different forces, without being a definite object for any one in particular. Thus a man may be said to please æsthetically, "when he does so without appealing to any one of the senses directly, and without any law or end being thought of in connection with him." Schiller cannot be made to say anything

more definite than this. His general position was probably much like Kant's (save in the case above mentioned, where he made a happy correction), and he probably looked upon Æsthetic as a mingling of several faculties, as a play of sentiment.

Schiller was faithful to Kant's teaching in its main lines, and his uncertainty was largely due to this. The existence of a *third sphere* uniting form and matter was for Schiller rather an ideal conformable to reason than a *definite* activity; it was supposititious, rather than effective.

But the Romantic movement in literature, which was at that time gaining ground, with its belief in a superhuman faculty called imagination, in genius breaker of rules, found no such need for restraint. Schiller's modest reserve was set aside, and with J. P. Richter we approach a mythology of the imagination. Many of his observations are, however, just, and his distinction between productive and reproductive imagination is excellent. How could humanity appreciate works of genius, he asks, were it without some common measure? All men who can go as far as saying "this is beautiful" before a beautiful thing, are capable of the latter. He then proceeds to establish to his own satisfaction categories of the imagination, leading from simple talent to the supreme form of male genius in which all faculties flourish together: a faculty of faculties.

The Romantic conception of art is, in substance, that of idealist German philosophy, where we find it in a more coherent and systematic form. It is the conception of Schelling, Solger, and Hegel.

Fichte, Kant's first great pupil, cannot be included with these, for his view of Æsthetic, largely influenced

by Schiller, is transformed in the Fichtian system to a moral activity, to a representation of the ethical ideal. The subjective idealism of Fichte, however, generated an Æsthetic: that of irony as the basé of art. The I that has created the universe can also destroy it. The universe is a vain appearance, smiled at by the Ego its creator, who surveys it as an artist his work, from without and from above. For Friedrich Schlegel, art was a perpetual farce, a parody of itself; and Tieck defined irony as a force which allows the poet to dominate his material.

Novalis, that Romantic Fichtian, dreamed of a magical idealism, an art of creating by an instantaneous act of the Ego. But Schelling's "system of transcendental idealism" was the first great philosophical affirmation of Romanticism and of conscious Neoplatonism reborn in Æsthetic.

Schelling has obviously studied Schiller, but he brings to the problem a mind more purely philosophical and a method more exactly scientific. He even takes Kant to task for faultiness of method. His remarks as to Plato's position are curious, if not conclusive. He says that Plato condemned the art of his time, because it was realistic and naturalistic: like all antique art, it exhibited a *finite* character. Plato's judgment would have been quite different had he known Christian art, of which the character is *infinity*.

Schelling held firm to the fusion of art and beauty effected by Schiller, but he combated Winckelmann's theory of abstract beauty with its negative conception of the characteristic, assigning to art the limits of the individual. Art is characteristic beauty; it is not the

individual, but the living conception of the individual. When the artist recognizes the eternal idea in an individual, and expresses it outwardly, he transforms the individual into a world apart, into a species, into an eternal idea. Characteristic beauty is the fulness of form which slays form: it does not silence passion, but restrains it as the banks of a river the waters that flow between them, but do not overflow.

Schelling's starting-point is the criticism of teleological judgment, as stated by Kant in his third Critique. Teleology is the union of theoretic with practical philosophy. But the system would not be complete, unless we could show the identity of the two worlds, theoretic and practical, in the subject itself. He must demonstrate the existence of an activity, which is at once unconscious as nature and conscious as spirit. This activity we find in Æsthetic, which is therefore "the general organ of philosophy, the keystone of the whole building."

Poetry and philosophy alone possess the world of the ideal, in which the real world vanishes. True art is not the impression of the moment, but the representation of infinite life: it is transcendental intuition objectified. The time will come when philosophy will return to poetry, which was its source, and on the new philosophy will arise a new mythology. Philosophy does not depict real things, but their ideas; so too, art. Those same ideas, of which real things are, as philosophy shows, the imperfect copies, reappear in art objectified as ideas, and therefore in their perfection. Art stands nearest to philosophy, which itself stands nearest to the Idea, and therefore nearest to perfection. Art differs from philosophy only by its *specialization*: in all other

ways it is the ideal world in its most complete expression. The three Ideas of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty correspond to the three powers of the ideal and of the real world. Beauty is not the universal whole, which is truth, nor is it the only reality, which is action: it is the perfect mingling of the two. "Beauty exists where the real or particular is so adequate to its concept that this infinite thing enters into the finite, and is contemplated in the concrete." Philosophy unites truth, morality, and beauty, in what they possess in common, and deduces them from their unique Source, which is God. If philosophy assume the character of science and of truth, although it be superior to truth, the reason for this lies in the fact that science and truth are simply the formal determination of philosophy.

Schelling looked upon mythology as a necessity for every art. Ideas are Gods, considered from the point of view of reality; for the essence of each is equal to God in a *particular* form. The characteristics of all Gods, including the Christian, are *pure limitation and absolute indivisibility*. Minerva has wisdom and strength, but lacks womanly tenderness; Juno has power and wisdom, but is without amorous charm, which she borrows with the girdle of Venus, who in her turn is without the wisdom of Minerva. What would these Gods become without their limitations? They would cease to be the objects of Fancy. Fancy is a faculty, apart from the pure intellect and from the reason. Distinct from imagination, which develops the products of art, Fancy has intuitions of them, grasps them herself, and herself represents them. Fancy is to imagination as intellectual intuition is to reason. Fancy, then, is intellectual intuition in art. In the

thought of Schelling, fancy, the new or artistic intuition, sister of intellectual intuition, came to dominate alike the intellect and the old conception of the fancy and the imagination, in a system for which reason alone did not suffice.

C. G. Solger followed Schelling and agreed with him in finding but little truth in the theories of Kant, and especially of Fichte. He held that their dialectic had failed to solve the difficulty of intellectual intuition. He too conceived of fancy as distinct from imagination, and divided the former into three degrees. Imagination he held to appertain to ordinary knowledge, "which re-establishes the original intuition to infinity." Fancy "originates from the original antithesis in the idea, and so operates that the opposing elements which are separated from the idea become perfectly united in reality. By means of fancy, we are able to understand things more lofty than those of common knowledge, and in them we recognize the idea itself as real. In art, fancy is the faculty of transforming the idea into reality."

For Solger as for Schelling, beauty belongs to the region of Ideas, which are inaccessible to common knowledge. Art is nearly allied to religion, for as religion is the abyss of the idea, into which our consciousness plunges, that it may become essential, so Art and the Beautiful resolve, in their way, the world of distinctions, the universal and the particular. Artistic activity is more than theoretical: it is practical, realized and perfect, and therefore belongs to practical, not to theoretic philosophy, as Kant wrongly believed. Since art must touch infinity on one side, it cannot have ordinary nature for its object. Art

therefore *ceases* in the portrait, and this explains why the ancients generally chose Gods or Heroes as models for sculpture. Every deity, even in a limited and particular form, expresses a definite modification of the Idea.

G. G. F. Hegel gives the same definition of art as Solger and Schelling. All three were mystical æstheticians, and the various shades of mystical Æsthetic, presented by these three writers, are not of great interest. Schelling forced upon art the abstract Platonic ideas, while Hegel reduced it to the *concrete idea.* This concrete idea was for Hegel the first and lowest of the three forms of the liberty of the spirit. It represented immediate, sensible, objectified knowledge; while Religion filled the second place, as representative consciousness with adoration, which is an element foreign to art alone. The third place was of course occupied by Philosophy, the free thought of the absolute spirit. Beauty and Truth are one for Hegel; they are united in the Idea. The beautiful he defined as *the sensible appearance of the Idea.*

Some writers have erroneously believed that the views of the three philosophers above mentioned lead back to those of Baumgarten. But that is not correct. They well understood that art cannot be made a medium for the expression of philosophic concepts. Not only are they opposed to the moralistic and intellectualistic view, but they are its active opponents. Schelling says that æsthetic production is in its essence absolutely free, and Hegel that art does not contain the universal as such.

Hegel accentuated the *cognoscitive* character of art, more than any of his predecessors. We have seen

that he placed it with Philosophy and Religion in the sphere of the absolute Spirit. But he does not allow either to Art or to Religion any difference of function from that of Philosophy, which occupies the highest place in his system. They are therefore inferior, necessary, grades of the Spirit. Of what use are they? Of none whatever, or at best, they merely represent transitory and historical phases of human life.

Thus we see that the tendency of Hegelianism is *anti-artistic*, as it is rationalistic and anti-religious.

This result of thought was a strange and a sad thing for one who loved art so fervently as Hegel. Our memories conjure up Plato, who also loved art well, and yet found himself logically obliged to banish the poet from his ideal Republic, after crowning him with roses. But the German philosopher was as staunch to the (supposed) command of reason as the Greek, and felt himself obliged to announce the death of art. Art, he says, occupies a lofty place in the human spirit, but not the most lofty, for it is limited to a restricted content and only a certain grade of truth can be expressed in art. Such are the Hellenic Gods, who can be transfused in the sensible and appear in it adequately. The Christian conception of truth is among those which cannot be so expressed. The spirit of the modern world, and more precisely the spirit of our religion and rational development, seem to have gone beyond the point at which art is the chief way of apprehending the Absolute. The peculiarity of artistic production no longer satisfies our highest needs. Thought and reflexion have surpassed art, the beautiful. He goes on to say that the reason generally given for this is the prevalence of

material and political interests. But the true reason is the inferiority in degree of art as compared with pure thought. Art is dead, and Philosophy can therefore supply its complete biography.

Hegel's *Vorlesungen über Æsthetik* amounts therefore to a funeral oration upon Art.

Romanticism and metaphysical idealism had placed art, sometimes above the clouds, sometimes within them, and believing that it was no good there to anyone, Hegel provided a decent burial.

Nothing perhaps better shows how well this fantastic conception of art suited the spirit of the time, than the fact that even the adversaries of Schelling, Solger, and Hegel either admit agreement with that conception, or find themselves involuntarily in agreement with it, while believing themselves to be very remote. They too are mystical æstheticians.

We all know with what virulence Arthur Schopenhauer attacked and combated Schelling, Hegel, and all the "charlatans" and "professors" who had divided among them the inheritance of Kant.

Well, Schopenhauer's theory of art starts, just like Hegel's, from the difference between the abstract and the concrete concept, which is the *Idea*. Schopenhauer's ideas are the Platonic ideas, although in the form which he gives to them, they have a nearer resemblance to the Ideas of Schelling than to the Idea of Hegel.

Schopenhauer takes much trouble to differentiate his ideas from intellectual concepts. He calls the idea "unity which has become plurality by means of space and time. It is the form of our intuitive apperception. The concept is, on the contrary, unity extracted from plurality by means of abstraction,

which is an act of our intellect. The concept may be called *unitas post rem*, the idea *unitas ante rem*."

The origin of this psychological illusion of the ideas or types of things is always to be found in the changing of the empirical classifications created for their own purposes by the natural sciences, into living realities.

Thus each art has for its sphere a special category of ideas. Architecture and its derivatives, gardening (and strange to say landscape-painting is included with it), sculpture and animal-painting, historical painting and the higher forms of sculpture, etc., all possess their special ideas. Poetry's chief object is man as idea. Music, on the contrary, does not belong to the hierarchy of the other arts. Schelling had looked upon music as expressing the rhythm of the universe itself. For Schopenhauer, music does not express ideas, but the *Will itself*.

The analogies between music and the world, between fundamental notes and crude matter, between the scale and the scale of species, between melody and conscious will, lead Schopenhauer to the conclusion that music is not only an arithmetic, as it appeared to Leibnitz, but indeed a metaphysic: "the occult metaphysical exercise of a soul not knowing that it philosophizes."

For Schopenhauer, as for his idealist predecessors, art is beatific. It is the flower of life; he who is plunged in artistic contemplation ceases to be an individual; he is the conscious subject, pure, freed from will, from pain, and from time.

Yet in Schopenhauer's system exist elements for a better and a more profound treatment of the problem

of art. He could sometimes show himself to be a lucid and acute analyst. For instance, he continually remarks that the categories of space and time are not applicable to art, *but only the general form of representation.* He might have deduced from this that art is the most immediate, not the most lofty grade of consciousness, since it precedes even the ordinary perceptions of space and time. Vico had already observed that this freeing oneself from ordinary perception, this dwelling in imagination, does not really mean an ascent to the level of the Platonic Ideas, but, on the contrary, a redescending to the sphere of immediate intuition, a return to childhood.

On the other hand, Schopenhauer had begun to submit the Kantian categories to impartial criticism, and finding the two forms of intuition insufficient, added a third, causality.

He also drew comparisons between art and history, and was more successful here than the idealist excogitators of a philosophy of history. Schopenhauer rightly saw that history was irreducible to concepts, that it is the contemplation of the individual, and therefore not a science. Having proceeded thus far, he might have gone further, and realized that the material of history is always the particular in its particularity, that of art what is and always is identical. But he preferred to execute a variation on the general motive that was in fashion at this time.

The fashion of the day! It rules in philosophy as elsewhere, and we are now about to see the most rigid and arid of analysts, the leader of the so-called *realist* school, or school of *exact science* in Germany

in the nineteenth century, plunge headlong into æsthetic mysticism.

G. F. Herbart (1813) begins his Æsthetic by freeing it from the discredit attaching to Metaphysic and to Psychology. He declares that the only true way of understanding art is to study particular examples of the beautiful and to note what they reveal as to its essence.

We shall now see what came of Herbart's analysis of these examples of beauty, and how far he succeeded in remaining free of Metaphysic.

For Herbart, beauty consists of *relations*. The science of Æsthetic consists of an enumeration of all the fundamental relations between colours, lines, tones, thoughts, and will. But for him these relations are not empirical or physiological. They cannot therefore be studied in a laboratory, because thought and the will form part of them, and these belong as much to Ethics as to the external world. But Herbart explicitly states that no true beauty is sensible, although sensation may and does often precede and follow the intuition of beauty. There is a profound distinction between the beautiful and the agreeable or pleasant: the latter does not require a representation, while the former consists in representations of relations, which are immediately followed by a judgment expressing unconditioned approval. Thus the merely pleasurable becomes more and more indifferent, but the beautiful appears always as of more and more permanent value. The judgment of taste is universal, eternal, immutable. The complete representation of the same relations always carries with it the same judgment. For Herbart, æsthetic judgments are the

general class containing the sub-class of ethical judgments. The five ethical ideas, of internal liberty, of perfection, of benevolence, of equity, and of justice, are five æsthetic ideas; or better, they are æsthetic concepts applied to the will in its relations.

Herbart looked upon art as a complex fact, composed of an external element possessing logical or psychological value, the content, and of a true æsthetic element, which is the form. Entertainment, instruction, and pleasure of all sorts are mingled with the beautiful, in order to obtain favour for the work in question. The æsthetic judgment, calm and serene in itself, may be accompanied by all sorts of psychic emotions, foreign to it. But the content is always transitory, relative, subject to moral laws, and judged by them. The form alone is perennial, absolute, and free. The true catharsis can only be effected by separating the form from the content. Concrete art may be the sum of two values, *but the æsthetic fact is form alone.*

For those capable of penetrating beneath appearances, the æsthetic doctrines of Herbart and of Kant will appear very similar. Herbart is notable as insisting, in the manner of Kant, on the distinction between free and adherent beauty (or adornment as sensuous stimulant), on the existence of pure beauty, object of necessary and universal judgments, and on a certain mingling of ethical with his æsthetic theory. Herbart, indeed, called himself "a Kantian, but of the year 1828." Kant's æsthetic theory, though it be full of errors, yet is rich in fruitful suggestions. Kant belongs to a period when philosophy is still young and pliant. Herbart came later, and is dry and one-sided. The romantics and the metaphysical idealists had

unified the theory of the beautiful and of art. Herbart restored the old duality and mechanism, and gave us an absurd, unfruitful form of mysticism, void of all artistic inspiration.

Herbart may be said to have taken all there was of false in the thought of Kant and to have made it into a system.

The beginning of the nineteenth century in Germany is notable for the great number of philosophical theories and of counter-theories, broached and rapidly discussed, before being discarded. None of the most prominent names in the period belong to philosophers of first-rate importance, though they made so much stir in their day.

The thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher was obscured and misunderstood amid those crowding mediocrities; yet it is perhaps the most interesting and the most noteworthy of the period.

Schleiermacher looked upon Æsthetic as an altogether modern form of thought. He perceived a profound difference between the "Poetics" of Aristotle, not yet freed from empirical precepts, and the tentative of Baumgarten in the eighteenth century. He praised Kant as having been the first to include Æsthetic among the philosophical disciplines. He admitted that with Hegel it had attained to the highest pinnacle, being connected with religion and with philosophy, and almost placed upon their level.

But he was dissatisfied with the absurdity of the attempt made by the followers of Baumgarten to construct a science or theory of sensuous pleasure. He disapproved of Kant's view of taste as being the principle of Æsthetic, of Fichte's art as moral teaching,

and of the vague conception of the beautiful as the centre of Æsthetic.

He approved of Schiller's marking of the moment of spontaneity in productive art, and he praised Schelling for having drawn attention to the figurative arts, as being less liable than poetry to be diverted to false and illusory moralistic ends. Before he begins the study of the place due to the artistic activity in Ethic, he carefully excludes from the study of Æsthetic all practical rules (which, being empirical, are incapable of scientific demonstration).

For Schleiermacher, the sphere of Ethic included the whole Philosophy of the Spirit, in addition to morality. These are the two forms of human activity —that which, like Logic, is the same in all men, and is called activity of identity, and the activity of difference or individuality. There are activities which, like art, are internal or immanent and individual, and others which are external or practical. *The true work of art is the internal picture.* Measure is what differentiates the artist's portrayal of anger on the stage and the anger of a really angry man. Truth is not sought in poetry, or if it be sought there, it is truth of an altogether different kind. The truth of poetry lies in coherent presentation. Likeness to a model does not compose the merit of a picture. Not the smallest amount of knowledge comes from art, which expresses only the truth of a particular consciousness. Art has for its field the immediate consciousness of self, which must be carefully distinguished from the thought of the Ego. This last is the consciousness of identity in the diversity of moments as they pass; the immediate consciousness of self is the diversity itself of

the moments, of which we should be aware, for life is nothing but the development of consciousness. In this field, art has sometimes been confused with two facts which accompany it there: these are sentient consciousness (that is, the feelings of pleasure and of pain) and religion. Schleiermacher here alludes to the sensualistic æstheticians of the eighteenth century, and to Hegel, who had almost identified art and religion. He refutes both points of view by pointing out that sentient pleasure and religious sentiment, however different they may be from other points of view, are yet both determined by an objective fact; while art, on the contrary, is free productivity.

Dream is the best parallel and proof of this free productivity. All the essential elements of art are found in dream, which is the result of free thoughts and of sensible intuitions, consisting simply of images. But dream, as compared with art, is chaotic: when measure and order is established in dream, it becomes art. Thoughts and images are alike essential to art, and to both is necessary ponderation, reflexion, measure, and unity, because otherwise every image would be confused with every other image. Thus the moments of inspiration and of ponderation are both necessary to art.

Schleiermacher's thought, so firm and lucid up to this point, begins to become less secure, with the discussion of typicity and of the extent to which the artist should follow Nature. He says that ideal figures, which Nature would give, were she not impeded by external obstacles, are the products of art. He notes that when the artist represents something really given, such as a portrait or a landscape, he renounces freedom of

production and adheres to the real. In the artist is a double tendency, toward the perfection of the type and toward the representation of natural reality. He should not fall into the abstraction of the type, nor into the insignificance of empirical reality. Schleiermacher feels all the difficulty of such a problem as whether there be one or several ideals of the human figure. This problem may be transferred to the sphere of art, and we may ask whether the poet is to represent only the ideal, or whether he should also deal with those obstacles to it that impede Nature in her efforts to attain. Both views contain half the truth. To art belongs the representation of the ideal as of the real, of the subjective and of the objective alike. The representation of the comic, that is of the anti-ideal and of the imperfect ideal, belongs to the domain of art. For the human form, both morally and physically, oscillates between the ideal and caricature.

He arrives at a most important definition as to the independence of art in respect to morality. The nature of art, as of philosophic speculation, excludes moral and practical effects. Therefore, *there is no other difference between works of art than their respective artistic perfection* (*Vollkommenheit in der Kunst*). If we could correctly predicate volitional acts in respect of works of art, then we should find ourselves admiring only those works which stimulated the will, and there would thus be established a difference of valuation, independent of artistic perfection. The true work of art depends upon the degree of perfection with which the external in it agrees with the internal.

Schleiermacher rightly combats Schiller's view that art is in any sense a game. That, he says, is the view

held by mere men of business, to whom business alone is serious. But artistic activity is universal, and a man completely deprived of it unthinkable, although the difference here between man and man, is gigantic, ranging from the simple desire to taste of art to the effective tasting of it, and from this, by infinite gradations, to productive genius.

The regrettable fact that Schleiermacher's thought has reached us only in an imperfect form, may account for certain of its defects, such as his failure to eliminate æsthetic classes and types, his retention of a certain residue of abstract formalism, his definition of art as the activity of difference. Had he better defined the moment of artistic reproduction, realized the possibility of tasting the art of various times and of other nations, and examined the true relation of art to science, he would have seen that this difference is merely empirical and to be surmounted. He failed also to recognize the identity of the æsthetic activity, with language as the base of all other theoretic activity.

But Schleiermacher's merits far outweigh these defects. He removed from Æsthetic its *imperativistic* character; he distinguished *a form of thought* different from *logical thought.* He attributed to our science a *non-metaphysical, anthropological* character. He *denied* the concept of the beautiful, substituting for it *artistic perfection,* and maintaining the æsthetic equality of a small with a great work of art, he looked upon the æsthetic fact as an exclusively *human productivity.*

Thus Schleiermacher, the theologian, in this period of metaphysical orgy, of rapidly constructed and as rapidly destroyed systems, perceived, with the

greatest philosophical acumen, what is really characteristic of art, and distinguished its properties and relations. Even where he fails to see clearly his way, he never abandons analysis for mere guess-work.

Schleiermacher, thus exploring the obscure region of the *immediate consciousness*, or of the æsthetic fact, can almost be heard crying out to his straying contemporaries: *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*

Speculation upon the origin and nature of language was rife at this time in Germany. Many theories were put forward, among the most curious being that of Schelling, who held language and mythology to be the product of a pre-human consciousness, allegorically expressed as the diabolic suggestions which had precipitated the Ego from the infinite to the finite.

Even Wilhelm von Humboldt was unable to free himself altogether from the intellectualistic prejudice of the substantial identity and the merely historical and accidental diversity of logical thought and language. He speaks of a *perfect* language, broken up and diminished with the lesser capacities of lesser peoples. He believed that language is something standing outside the individual, independent of him, and capable of being revived by use. But there were two men in Humboldt, an old man and a young one. The latter was always suggesting that language should be looked upon as a living, not as a dead thing, as an activity, not as a word. This duality of thought sometimes makes his writing difficult and obscure. Although he speaks of an internal form of speech, he fails to identify this with art as expression. The reason is that he looks upon the word in too unilateral a manner, as a means of developing logical thought, and his ideas of

Æsthetic are too vague and too inexact to enable him to discover their identity. Despite his perception of the profound truth that poetry precedes prose, Humboldt gives grounds for doubt as to whether he had clearly recognized and firmly grasped the fact that language is always poetry, and that prose (science) is a distinction, not of æsthetic form, but of content, that is, of logical form.

Steinthal, the greatest follower of Humboldt, solved his master's contradictions, and in 1855 sustained successfully against the Hegelian Becker the thesis that words are necessary for thought. He pointed to the deaf-mute with his signs, to the mathematician with his formulæ, to the Chinese language, where the figurative portion is an essential of speech, and declared that Becker was wrong in believing that the Sanskrit language was derived from twelve cardinal concepts. He showed effectively that the concept and the word, the logical judgment and the proposition, are not comparable. The proposition is not a judgment, but the representation of a judgment; and all propositions do not represent logical judgments. Several judgments can be expressed with one proposition. The logical divisions of judgments (the relations of concepts) have no correspondence in the grammatical division of propositions. "If we speak of a logical form of the proposition, we fall into a contradiction in terms not less complete than his who should speak of the angle of a circle, or of the periphery of a triangle." He who speaks, in so far as he speaks, has not thoughts, but language.

When Steinthal had several times solemnly proclaimed the independence of language as regards Logic, and that it produces its forms in complete autonomy, he

proceeded to seek the origin of language, recognizing with Humboldt that the question of its origin is the same as that of its nature. Language, he said, belongs to the great class of reflex movements, but this only shows one side of it, not its true nature. Animals, like men, have reflex actions and sensations, though nature enters the animal by force, takes it by assault, conquers and enslaves it. With man is born language, because he is resistance to nature, governance of his own body, and liberty. "Language is liberation; even to-day we feel that our soul becomes lighter, and frees itself from a weight, when we speak." Man, before he attains to speech, must be conceived of as accompanying all his sensations with bodily movements, mimetic attitudes, gestures, and particularly with articulate sounds. What is still lacking to him, that he may attain to speech? The connexion between the reflex movements of the body and the state of the soul. If his sentient consciousness be already consciousness, then he lacks the consciousness of consciousness; if it be already intuition, then he lacks the intuition of intuition. In sum, he lacks the *internal form of language.* With this comes speech, which forms the connexion. Man does not choose the sound of his speech. This is given to him and he adopts it instinctively.

When we have accorded to Steinthal the great merit of having rendered coherent the ideas of Humboldt, and of having clearly separated linguistic from logical thought, we must note that he too failed to perceive the *identity* of the internal form of language, or "intuition of the intuition," as he called it, with the æsthetic *imagination.* Herbart's psychology, to which Steinthal adhered, did not afford him any means for

this identification. Herbart separated logic from psychology, calling it a normative science; he failed to discern the exact limits between feeling and spiritual formation, psyche or soul, and spirit, and to see that one of these spiritual formations is logical thought or activity, which is not a code of laws imposed from without. For Herbart, Æsthetic, as we know, was a code of beautiful formal relations. Thus Steinthal, following Herbart in psychology, was bound to look upon Art as a beautifying of thought, Linguistic as the science of speech, Rhetoric and Æsthetic as the science of beautiful speech.

Steinthal never realized that to speak is to speak well or beautifully, under penalty of *not* speaking, and that the revolution which he and Humboldt had effected in the conception of language must inevitably react upon and transform Poetic, Rhetoric, and Æsthetic.

Thus, despite so many efforts of conscientious analysis on the part of Humboldt and of Steinthal, the unity of language and of poetry, and the identification of the science of language and the science of poetry still found its least imperfect expression in the prophetic aphorisms of Vico.

The philosophical movement in Germany from the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth, notwithstanding its many errors, is yet so notable and so imposing with the philosophers already considered, as to merit the first place in the European thought of that period. This is even more the case as regards Æsthetic than as regards philosophy in general.

France was the prey of Condillac's sensualism, and therefore incapable of duly appreciating the spiritual

activity of art. We hardly get a glimpse of Winckelmann's transcendental spiritualism in Quatremère de Quincy, and the frigid academics of Victor Cousin were easily surpassed by Theodore Jouffroy, though he too failed of isolating the æsthetic fact. French Romanticism defined literature as "the expression of society," admired under German influence the grotesque and the characteristic, declared the independence of art in the formula of "art for art's sake," but did not succeed in surpassing philosophically the old doctrine of the "imitation of nature." F. Schlegel and Solger indeed were largely responsible for the Romantic movement in France—Schlegel with his belief in the characteristic or *interesting* as the principle of modern art, which led him to admire the cruel and the ugly; Solger with his dialectic arrangement, whereby the finite or terrestrial element is absorbed and annihilated in the divine and thus becomes the tragic, or *vice versa*, and the result is the comic. Rosenkranz published in Königsberg an Æsthetic of the Ugly, and the works of Vischer and Zeising abound in subleties relating to the Idea and to its expression in the beautiful and sublime. These writers conceived of the Idea as the Knight Purebeautiful, constrained to abandon his tranquil ease through the machinations of the Ugly; the Ugly leads him into all sorts of disagreeable adventures, from all of which he eventually emerges victorious. The Sublime, the Comic, the Humorous, and so on, are his Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena. Another version of their knight's adventures might be described as his conquest by his enemies, but at the moment of conquest he transforms and irradiates his conquerors. To such a mediocre and artificial

mythology led the much-elaborated theory of the Modifications of the Beautiful.

In England, the associationist psychology continued to hold sway, and showed, with Dugald Stewart's miserable attempt at establishing two forms of association, its incapacity to rise to the conception of the imagination. With the poet Coleridge, England also showed the influence of German thought, and Coleridge elaborated with Wordsworth a more correct conception of poetry and of its difference from science. But the most notable contribution in English at that period came from another poet, P. B. Shelley, whose *Defence of Poetry* contains profound, though unsystematic views, as to the distinction between reason and imagination, prose and poetry, on primitive language, and on the poetic power of objectification.

In Italy, Francesco de Sanctis gave magnificent expression to the independence of art. He taught literature in Naples from 1838 to 1848, in Turin and Zurich from 1850 to 1860, and after 1870 he was a professor in the University of Naples. His *Storia della letteratura italiana* is a classic, and in it and in monographs on individual writers he exposed his doctrines.

Prompted by a natural love of speculation, he began to examine the old grammarians and rhetoricians, with a view to systematize them. But very soon he proceeded to criticize and to surpass their theories. The cold rules of reason did not find favour with him, and he advised young men to go direct to the original works.

The philosophy of Hegel began to penetrate Italy, and the study of Vico was again taken up. De

Sanctis translated the *Logic* of Hegel in prison, where the Bourbon Government had thrown him for his liberalism. Bénard had begun his translation of the *Æsthetic* of Hegel, and so completely in harmony was De Sanctis with the thought of this master, that he is said to have guessed from a study of the first volume what the unpublished volumes must contain, and to have lectured upon them to his pupils. Traces of mystical idealism and of Hegelianism persist even in his later works, and the distinction, which he always maintained, between imagination and fancy certainly came to him from Hegel and Schelling. He held fancy alone to be the true poetic faculty.

De Sanctis absorbed all the juice of Hegel, but rejected the husks of his pedantry, of his formalism, of his apriority.

Fancy for De Sanctis was not the mystical transcendental apperception of the German philosophers, but simply the faculty of poetic synthesis and creation, opposed to the imagination, which reunites details and always has something mechanical about it. Faith and poetry, he used to say, are not dead, but transformed. His criticism of Hegel amounted in many places to the correction of Hegel; and as regards Vico, he is careful to point out, that when, in dealing with the Homeric poems, Vico talks of generic types, he is no longer the critic of art, but the historian of civilization. De Sanctis saw that, *artistically*, Achilles must always be Achilles, never a force or an abstraction.

Thus De Sanctis succeeded in keeping himself free from the Hegelian domination, at a moment when Hegel was the acknowledged master of speculation.

But his criticism extended also to other German æstheticians. By a curious accident, he found himself at Zurich in the company of Theodore Vischer, that ponderous Hegelian, who laughed disdainfully at the mention of poetry, of music, and of the decadent Italian race. De Sanctis laughed at Vischer's laughter. Wagner appeared to him a corrupter of music, and "nothing in the world more unæsthetic than the Æsthetic of Theodore Vischer." His lectures on Ariosto and Petrarch, before an international public at Zurich, were delivered with the desire of correcting the errors of these and of other German philosophers and learned men. He gave his celebrated definitions of French and German critics. The French critic does not indulge in theories: one feels warmth of impression and sagacity of observation in his argument. He never leaves the concrete; he divines the quality of the writer's genius and the quality of his work, and studies the man, in order to understand the writer. His great fault is shown in substituting for criticism of the actual art work a historical criticism of the author and of his time. For the German, on the other hand, there is nothing so simple that he does not contrive to distort and to confuse it. He collects shadows around him, from which shoot vivid rays. He laboriously brings to birth that morsel of truth which he has within him. He would seize and define what is most fugitive and impalpable in a work of art. Although nobody talks so much of life as he does, yet no one so much delights in decomposing and generalizing it. Having thus destroyed the particular, he is able to show you as the result of this process, final in appearance, but in reality pre-

conceived and apriorist, one measurement for all feet, one garment for all bodies.

About this time he studied Schopenhauer, who was then becoming the fashion. Schopenhauer said of this criticism of De Sanctis: "That Italian has absorbed me *in succum et sanguinem*." What weight did he attach to Schopenhauer's much-vaunted writings on art? Having exposed the theory of Ideas, he barely refers to the third volume, "which contains an exaggerated theory of Æsthetic."

In his criticism of Petrarch, De Sanctis finally broke with metaphysical Æsthetic, saying of Hegel's school that it believed the beautiful to become art when it surpassed form and revealed the concept or pure idea. This theory and the subtleties derived from it, far from characterizing art, represent its contrary: the impotent velleity for art, which cannot slay abstractions and come in contact with life.

De Sanctis held that outside the domain of art all is shapeless. The ugly is of the domain of art, if art give it form. Is there anything more beautiful than Iago? If he be looked upon merely as a contrast to Othello, then we are in the position of those who looked upon the stars as placed where they are to serve as candles for the earth.

Form was for De Sanctis the word which should be inscribed over the entrance to the Temple of Art. In the work of art are form and content, but the latter is no longer chaotic: the artist has given to it a new value, has enriched it with the gift of his own personality. But if the content has not been assimilated and made his own by the artist, then the work lacks generative power: it is of no value

as art or literature, though as history or scientific document its value may be great. The Gods of Homer's *Iliad* are dead, but the *Iliad* remains. Guelf and Ghibelline have disappeared from Italy: not so the *Divine Comedy*, which is as vigorous to-day as when Dante first took pen in hand. Thus De Sanctis held firmly to the independence of art, but he did not accept the formula of "art for art's sake," in so far as it meant separation of the artist from life, mutilation of the content, art reduced to mere dexterity.

For De Sanctis, form was identical with imagination, with the artist's power of expressing or representing his artistic vision. This much must be admitted by his critics. But he never attained to a clear definition of art. His theory of Æsthetic always remained a sketch: wonderful indeed, but not clearly developed and deduced. The reason for this was De Sanctis' love of the concrete. No sooner had he attained from general ideas a sufficient clarity of vision for his own purposes, than he plunged again into the concrete and particular. He did not confine his activity to literature, but was active also in politics and in the prosecution and encouragement of historical studies.

As a critic of literature, De Sanctis is far superior to Sainte-Beuve, Lessing, Macaulay, or Taine. Flaubert's genial intuition adumbrated what De Sanctis achieved. In one of his letters to Georges Sand, Flaubert speaks of the lack of an *artistic* critic. "In Laharpe's time, criticism was grammatical; in the time of Sainte-Beuve and of Taine, it is historical. They analyse with great subtlety the historical environment in which the work appeared and the causes which have produced

it. But the *unconscious* element in poetry? Whence does it come? And composition? And style? And the point of view of the author? Of all that they never speak. For such a critic, great imagination and great goodness are necessary, I mean an ever-ready faculty of enthusiasm, and then *taste*, a quality so rare, even among the best, that it is never mentioned."

De Sanctis alone fulfilled the conditions of Flaubert, and Italy has in his writings a looking-glass for her literature unequalled by any other country.

But with De Sanctis, the philosopher of art, the æsthetician, is not so great as the critic of literature. The one is accessory to the other, and his use of æsthetic terminology is so inconstant that a lack of clearness of thought might be found in his work by anyone who had not studied it with care. But his want of system is more than compensated by his vitality, by his constant citation of actual works, and by his intuition of the truth, which never abandoned him. His writings bear the further charm of suggesting new kingdoms to conquer, new mines of richness to explore.

While the cry of "Down with Metaphysic" was resounding in Germany, and a furious reaction had set in against the sort of Walpurgisnacht to which the later Hegelians had reduced science and history, the pupils of Herbart came forward and with an insinuating air they seemed to say: "What is this? Why, it is a rebellion against Metaphysic, the very thing our master wished for and tried to achieve, half a century ago! But here we are, his heirs and successors, and we want to be your allies! An understanding between us will be easy. Our Metaphysic is in agreement with the atomic theory, our Psychology with mechanicism, our Ethic and

Æsthetic with hedonism." Herbart, who died in 1841, would probably have disdained and rejected his followers, who thus courted popularity and cheapened Metaphysic, putting a literal interpretation on his realities, his ideas and representations, and upon all his most lofty excogitations.

The protagonist of these neo-Herbartians was Robert Zimmermann. He constructed his system of Æsthetic out of Herbart, whom he perverted to his own uses, and even employed the much-abused Hegelian dialectic in order to introduce modifications of the beautiful into pure beauty. The beautiful, he said, is a model which possesses greatness, fulness, order, correction, and definite compensation. Beauty appears to us in a characteristic form, as a copy of this model.

Vischer, against whom was directed this work of Zimmermann, found it easy to reply. He ridiculed Zimmermann's meaning of the symbol as the object around which are clustered beautiful forms. "Does an artist paint a fox, simply that he may depict an object of animal nature. No, no, my dear sir, far from it. This fox is a symbol, because the painter here employs lines and colours, in order to express something different from lines and colours. 'You think I am a fox,' cries the painted animal. 'You are mightily mistaken; I am, on the contrary, a portmanteau, an exhibition by the painter of red, white, grey, and yellow tints.'" Vischer also made fun of Zimmermann's enthusiasm for the æsthetic value of the sense of touch. "What joy it must be to touch the back of the bust of Hercules in repose! To stroke the sinuous limbs of the Venus of Milo or of the Faun of Barberini must give a pleasure to the hand equal

to that of the ear as it listens to the puissant fugues of Bach or to the suave melodies of Mozart." Vischer defined the formal Æsthetic of Zimmermann as a queer mixture of mysticism and mathematic.

Lotze, in common with the great majority of thinkers, was dissatisfied with Zimmermann, but could only oppose his formalism with a variety of the old mystical Æsthetic. Who, he asked, could believe that the human form pleases only by its external proportions, regardless of the spirit within. Art, like beauty, should "enclose the world of values in the world of forms." This struggle between the Æsthetic of the content and the Æsthetic of the form attained its greatest height in Germany between 1860 and 1870, with Zimmermann, Vischer, and Lotze as protagonists.

These writers were followed by J. Schmidt, who in 1875 ventured to say that both Lotze and Zimmermann had failed to see that the problem of Æsthetic concerned, not the beauty or ugliness of the content or of the form as mathematical relations, but their representation; Köstlin, who erected an immense artificial structure with the materials of his predecessors modified; Schasler, who is interesting as having converted the old Vischer to his thesis of the importance of the Ugly, as introducing modifications into the beautiful and being the principle of movement there. Vischer confesses that at one time he had followed the Hegelian method and believed that in the essence of beauty is born a disquietude, a fermentation, a struggle: the Idea conquers, hurls the image into the unlimited, and the Sublime is born; but the image, offended in its finitude, declares war upon the Idea, and the Comic appears. Thus the fight is finished

and the Beautiful returns to itself, as the result of these struggles. But now, he says, Schasler has persuaded him that the Ugly is the leaven which is necessary to all the special forms of the Beautiful.

E. von Hartmann is in close relation with Schasler. His Æsthetic (1890) also makes great use of the Ugly. Since he insists upon appearance as a necessary characteristic of the beautiful, he considers himself justified in calling his theory concrete idealism. Hartmann considers himself in opposition to the formalism of Herbart, inasmuch as he insists upon the idea as an indispensable and determining element of beauty. Beauty, he says, is truth, but it is not historical truth, nor scientific nor reflective truth: it is metaphysical and ideal. "Beauty is the prophet of idealistic truth in an age without faith, hating Metaphysic, and acknowledging only realistic truth." Æsthetic truth is without method and without control: it leaps at once from the subjective appearance to the essence of the ideal. But in compensation for this, it possesses the fascination of conviction, which immediate intuition alone possesses. The higher Philosophy rises, the less need has she of passing through the world of the senses and of science: she approaches ever more nearly to art. Thus Philosophy starts on the voyage to the ideal, like Baedeker's traveller, "without too much baggage." In the Beautiful is immanent logicity, the microcosmic idea, the unconscious. By means of the unconscious, the process of intellectual intuition takes place in it. The Beautiful is a mystery, because its root is in the Unconscious.

No philosopher has ever made so great a use of the Ugly as Hartmann. He divides Beauty into

grades, of which the one below is ugly as compared with that above it. He begins with the mathematical, superior to the sensibly agreeable, which is unconscious. Thence to formal beauty of the second order, the dynamically agreeable, to formal beauty of the third order, the passive teleological; to this degree belong utensils, and language, which in Hartmann's view is a dead thing, inspired with seeming life, only at the moment of use. Such things did the philosopher of the Unconscious dare to print in the country of a Humboldt during the lifetime of a Steinthal! He proceeds in his list of things beautiful, with formal beauty of the fourth degree, which is the active or living teleological, with the fifth, which is that of species. Finally he reaches concrete beauty, or the individual microcosm, the highest of all, because the individual idea is superior to the specific, and is beauty, no longer formal, but of content.

All these degrees of beauty are, as has been said, connected with one another by means of the ugly, and even in the highest degree, which has nothing superior to it, the ugly continues its office of beneficent titillation. The outcome of this ultimate phase is the famous theory of the Modifications of the Beautiful. None of these modifications can occur without a struggle, save the sublime and the graceful, which appear without conflict at the side of supreme beauty. Hartmann gives four instances: the solution is either immanent, logical, transcendental, or combined. The idyllic, the melancholy, the sad, the glad, the elegiac, are instances of the immanent solution; the comic in all its forms is the logical solution; the tragic is the transcendental solution; the combined form is found in the humorous,

the tragi-comic. When none of these solutions is possible, we have the ugly; and when an ugliness of content is expressed by a formal ugliness, we have the maximum of uglincss, thc true æsthetic devil.

Hartmann is the last noteworthy representative of the German metaphysical school. His works are gigantic in size and appear formidable. But if one be not afraid of giants and venture to approach near, one finds nothing but a big Morgante, full of the most commonplace prejudices, quite easily killed with the bite of a crab!

During this period, Æsthetic had few representatives in other countries. The famous conference of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, held in Paris in 1857, gave to the world the "Science du Beau" of Lévêque. No one is interested in it now, but it is amusing to note that Lévêque announced himself to be a disciple of Plato, and went on to attribute eight characteristics to the beautiful. These he discovered by closely examining the lily! No wonder he was crowned with laurels! He proved his wonderful theory by instancing a child playing with its mother, a symphony of Beethoven, and the life of Socrates! One of his colleagues, who could not resist making fun of his learned friend, remarked that he would be glad to know what part was played in the life of a philosopher by the normal vivacity of colour!

Thus German theory made no way in France, and England proved even more refractory.

J. Ruskin showed a poverty, an incoherence, and a lack of system in respect to Æsthetic, which puts him almost out of court. His was the very reverse of

the philosophic temperament. His pages of brilliant prose contain his own dreams and caprices. They are the work of an artist and should be enjoyed as such, being without any value for philosophy. His theoretic faculty of the beautiful, which he held to be distinct alike from the intelligence and from feeling, is connected with his belief in beauty as a revelation of the divine intentions, "the seal which God sets upon his works." Thus the natural beauty, which is perceived by the pure heart, when contemplating some object untouched by the hand of man, is far superior to the work of the artist. Ruskin was too little capable of analysis to understand the complicated psychologico-æsthetic process taking place within him, as he contemplated some streamlet, or the nest of some small bird.

At Naples flourished between 1861 and 1884 Antonio Tari, who kept himself in touch with the movement of German thought, and followed the German idealists in placing Æsthetic in a sort of middle kingdom, a temperate zone, between the glacial, inhabited by the Esquimaux of thought, and the torrid, dwelt in by the giants of action. He dethroned the Beautiful, and put Æsthetic in its place, for the Beautiful is but the first moment; the later ones are the Comic, the Humorous, and the Dramatic. His fertile imagination found metaphors and similes in everything: for instance, he called the goat the Devil, opposed to the lamb, Jesus. His remarks on men and women are full of quaint fancies. He granted to women grace, but not beauty, which resides in equilibrium. This is proved by her falling down so easily when she walks; by her bow legs, which have to support her wide hips, made for gestation; by her

narrow shoulders, and her opulent breast. She is therefore a creature altogether devoid of equilibrium!

I wish that it were possible to record more of the sayings of the excellent Tari, "the last joyous priest of an arbitrary Æsthetic, source of confusion."

The ground lost to the German school of metaphysicians was occupied during the second half of the nineteenth century by the evolutionary and positivist metaphysicians, of whom Herbert Spencer is the most notable representative. The peculiarity of this school lies in repeating at second or third hand certain idealist views, deprived of the element of pure philosophy, given to them by a Schelling or a Hegel, and in substituting a quantity of minute facts and anecdotes, with a view to providing the positivist varnish. These theories are dear to vulgar minds, because they correspond to inveterate religious beliefs, and the lustre of the varnish explains the good fortune of Spencerian positivism in our time. Another notable trait of this school is its barbaric contempt for history, especially for the history of philosophy, and its consequent lack of all link with the series composed of the secular efforts of so many thinkers. Without this link, there can be no fruitful labour and no possibility of progress.

Spencer is colossal in his ignorance of all that has been written or thought on the subject of Æsthetic (to limit ourselves to this branch alone). He actually begins his work on the Philosophy of Style with these words: "No one, I believe, has ever produced a complete theory of the art of writing." This in 1852! He begins his chapter on æsthetic feelings in the *Principles of Psychology* by admitting that

he has heard of the observation made by a German author, whose name he forgets (Schiller!), on the connexion between art and play. Had Spencer's remarks on Æsthetic been written in the eighteenth century, they might have occupied a humble place among the first rude attempts at æsthetic speculation, but appearing in the nineteeth century, they are without value, as the little of value they contain had been long said by others.

In his *Principles of Psychology* Spencer looks upon æsthetic feelings as arising from the discharge of the exuberant energy of the organism. This he divides into degrees, and believes that we attain complete enjoyment when these degrees are all working satisfactorily each on its own plane, and when what is painful in excessive activity has been avoided. His degrees are sensation, sensation accompanied by representative elements, perception accompanied by more complex elements of representation, then emotion, and that state of consciousness which surpasses sensations and perceptions. But Spencer has no suspicion of what art really is. His views oscillate between sensualism and moralism, and he sees little in the whole art of antiquity, of the Middle Ages, or of modern times, which can be looked upon as otherwise than imperfect!

The Physiology of Æsthetics has also had its votaries in Great Britain, among whom may be mentioned J. Sully, A. Bain, and Allen. These at any rate show some knowledge of the concrete fact of art. Allen harks back to the old distinction between necessary and vital activities and superfluous activities, and gives a physiological definition, which may be read in his

Physiological Æsthetics. More recent writers also look upon the physiological fact as the cause of the pleasure of art; but for them it does not alone depend upon the visual organ, and the muscular phenomena associated with it, but also on the participation of some of the most important bodily functions, such as respiration, circulation, equilibrium, intimate muscular accommodation. They believe that art owes its origin to the pleasure that some prehistoric man must have experienced in breathing regularly, without having to re-adapt his organs, when he traced for the first time on a bone or on clay regular lines separated by regular intervals.

A similar order of physico-æsthetic researches has been made in Germany, under the auspices of Helmholtz, Brücke, and Stumpf. But these writers have succeeded better than the above-mentioned, by restricting themselves to the fields of optic and acoustic, and have supplied information as to the physical processes of artistic technique and as to the pleasure of visual and auditive impressions, without attempting to melt Æsthetic into Physic, or to deprive the former of its spiritual character. They have even occasionally indicated the difference between the two kinds of research. Even the degenerate Herbartians, converting the metaphysical forms of their master into physiological phenomena, made soft eyes at the new sensualists and æsthetico-physiologists.

The Natural Sciences have become in our day a sort of superstition, allied to a certain, perhaps unconscious, hypocrisy. Not only have chemical, physical, and physiological laboratories become a sort of Sibylline grots, where resound the most extraordinary questions

about everything that can interest the spirit of man, but even those who really do prosecute their researches with the old inevitable method of internal observation, have been unable to free themselves from the illusion that they are, on the contrary, employing *the method of the natural sciences.*

Hippolyte Taine's Philosophy of Art represents such an illusion. He declares that when we have studied the diverse manifestations of art in all peoples and at all epochs, we shall then possess a complete Æsthetic. Such an Æsthetic would be a sort of Botany applied to the works of man. This mode of study would provide moral science with a basis equally as sure as that which the natural sciences already possess. Taine then proceeds to define art without regard to the natural sciences, by analysing, like a simple mortal, what passes in the human soul when brought face to face with a work of art. But what analysis and what definitions!

Art, he says, is imitation, but of a sort that tries to express an essential characteristic. Thus the principal characteristic of a lion is to be "a great carnivore," and we observe this characteristic in all its limbs. Holland has for essential characteristic that of being a land formed of alluvial soil.

Now without staying to consider these two remarkable instances, let us ask, what is this essential characteristic of Taine? It is the same as the ideas, types, or concepts that the old æsthetic teaching assigned to art as its object. Taine himself removes all doubt as to this, by saying that this characteristic is what philosophers call the essence of things, and for that reason they declare that the purpose of art is to

manifest things. He declares that he will not employ the word essence, which is technical. But he accepts and employs the thought that the word expresses. He believes that there are two routes by which man can attain to the superior life: science and art. By the first, he apprehends fundamental laws and causes, and expresses them in abstract terms; by the second, he expresses these same laws and causes in a manner comprehensible to all, by appealing to the heart and feeling, as well as to the reason of man. Art is both superior and popular; it makes manifest what is highest, and makes it manifest to all.

That Taine here falls into the old pedagogic theory of Æsthetic is evident. Works of art are arranged for him in a scale of values, as for the æsthetic metaphysicians. He began by declaring the absurdity of all judgment of taste, "à chacun son goût," but he ends by declaring that personal taste is without value, that we must establish a common measure before proceeding to praise or blame. His scale of values is double or triple. We must first fix the degree of importance of the characteristic, that is, the greater or less generality of the idea, and the degree of good in it, that is to say, its greater or lesser moral value. These, he says, are two degrees of the same thing, strength, seen from different sides. We must also establish the degree of convergence of the effects, that is, the fulness of expression, the harmony between the idea and the form.

This half-moral, half-metaphysical exposition is accompanied with the usual protestations, that the matter in hand is to be studied methodically, analytically, as the naturalist would study it, that he will try to

reach "a law, not a hymn." As if these protestations could abolish the true nature of his thought! Taine actually went so far as to attempt dialectic solutions of works of art! "In the primitive period of Italian art, we find the soul without the body: Giotto. At the Renaissance, with Verrocchio and his school, we find the body without the soul. With Raphael, in the sixteenth century, we find expression and anatomy in harmony: body and soul." Thesis, antithesis, synthesis!

With G. T. Fechner we find the like protestations and the like procedure. He will study Æsthetic inductively, from beneath. He seeks clarity, not loftiness. Proceeding thus inductively, he discovers a long series of laws or principles of Æsthetic, such as unity in variety, association and contrast, change and persistence, the golden mean, etc. He exhibits this chaos with delight at showing himself so much of a physiologist, and so inconclusive. Then he proceeds to describe his experiments in Æsthetics. These consist of attempts to decide, for instance, by methods of choice, which of certain rectangles of cardboard is the most agreeable, and which the most disagreeable, to a large number of people arbitrarily chosen. Naturally, these results do not agree with others obtained on other occasions, but Fechner knows that errors correct themselves, and triumphantly publishes long lists of these valuable experiments. He also communicates to us the shapes and measurements of a large number of pictures in museums, as compared with their respective subjects! Such are the experiments of physiological æstheticians.

But Fechner, when he comes to define what beauty and what art really are, is, like everyone else, obliged

to fall back upon introspection. But his definition is trivial, and his comparison of his three degrees of beauty to a family is simply grotesque in its *naïveté.* He terms this theory the eudemonistic theory, and we are left wondering why, when he had this theory all cut and dried in his mind, he should all the same give himself the immense trouble of compiling his tables and of enumerating his laws and principles, which do not agree with his theory. Perhaps it was all a pastime for him, like playing at patience, or collecting postage-stamps?

Another example of superstition in respect to the natural sciences is afforded by Ernest Grosse. Grosse abounds in contempt for what he calls speculative Æsthetic. Yet he desires a Science of Art (Kunstwissenschaft), which shall formulate its laws from those historical facts which have hitherto been collected.

But Grosse wishes us to complete the collection of historical evidence with ethnographical and prehistoric materials, for we cannot obtain really general laws of art from the exclusive study of cultivated peoples, "just as a theory of reproduction exclusively based upon the form it takes with mammifers, must necessarily be imperfect!"

He is, however, aware that the results of experiences among savages and prehistoric races do not alone suffice to furnish us with an equipment for such investigations as that concerning the nature of Art, and, like any ordinary mortal, he feels obliged to interrogate, before starting, the spirit of man. He therefore proceeds to define Æsthetic on apriorist principles, which, he remarks, can be discarded when we shall have obtained the complete theory, in like

manner with the scaffolding that has served for the erection of a house.

Words! Words! Vain words! He proceeds to define Æsthetic as the activity which in its development and result has the immediate value of feeling, and is, therefore, an end in itself. Art is the opposite of practice; the activity of games stands intermediate between the two, having also its end in its own activity.

The Æsthetics of Taine and of Grosse have been called sociological. Seeing that any true definition of sociology as a science is impossible, for it is composed of psychological elements, which are for ever varying, we do not delay to criticize the futile attempts at definition, but pass at once to the objective results attained by the sociologists. This superstition, like the naturalistic, takes various forms in practical life. We have, for instance, Proudhon (1875), who would hark back to Platonic Æsthetic, class the æsthetic activity among the merely sensual, and command the arts to further the cause of virtue, on pain of judicial proceedings in case of contumacy.

But M. Guyau is the most important of sociological æstheticians. His works, published in Paris toward the end of last century, and his posthumous work, entitled *Les problèmes de l'Esthétique contemporaine*, substitute for the theory of play, that of *life*, and the posthumous work above-mentioned makes it evident that by life he means social life. Art is the development of social sympathy, but the whole of art does not enter into sociology. Art has two objects: the production of agreeable sensations (colours, sounds, etc.) and of phenomena of psychological induction,

which include ideas and feelings of a more complex nature than the foregoing, such as sympathy for the personages represented, interest, piety, indignation, etc. Thus art becomes the expression of life. Hence arise two tendencies: one for harmony, consonance, for all that delights the ear and eye; the other transforming life, under the dominion of art. True genius is destined to balance these two tendencies; but the decadent and the unbalanced deprive art of its sympathetic end, setting æsthetic sympathy against human sympathy. If we translate this language into that with which we are by this time quite familiar, we shall see that Guyau admits an art that is merely hedonistic, and places above it another art, also hedonistic, but serving the ends of morality.

M. Nordau wages war against the decadent and unbalanced, in much the same manner as Guyau. He assigns to art the function of re-establishing the integrity of life, so much broken up and specialized in our industrial civilization. He remarks that there is such a thing as art for art's sake, the simple expression of the internal states of the individual, but it is the art of the cave-dweller.

C. Lombroso's theory of genius as degeneration may be grouped with the naturalistic theories. His argument is in essence the following. Great mental efforts, and total absorption in one dominant thought, often produce physiological disorders or atrophy of important vital functions. Now these disorders often lead to madness; therefore, genius may be identified with madness. This proof, from the particular to the general, does not follow that of traditional Logic. But with Lombroso, Büchner, Nordau, and the like

we have come to the boundary between specious and vulgar error. They confuse scientific analysis with historical research. Such inquiries may have value for history, but they have none for Æsthetic. Thus, too, A. Lang maintains that the doctrine of the origin of art as disinterested expression of the mimetic faculty is not confirmed in what we know of primitive art, which is rather decorative than expressive. But primitive art, which is a given fact to be interpreted, cannot ever become its own criterion of interpretation.

The naturalistic misunderstanding has had a bad effect on linguistic researches, which have not been carried out on the lofty plane to which Humboldt and Steinthal had brought them.

Max Müller is popular and exaggerated. He fails clearly to distinguish thought from logical thought, although in one place he remarks that the formation of names has a more intimate connexion with wit than with judgment. He holds that the science of language is not historical, but natural, because language is not the invention of man, altogether ignoring the science of the spirit, philosophy, of which language is a part. For Max Müller, the natural sciences were the only sciences. The consciousness of the science of the spirit becomes ever more obscured, and we find the philologist W. D. Whitney combating Max Müller's "miracles" and maintaining the separability of thought and speech.

With Hermann Paul (1880) we have an awakening of Humboldt's spirit. Paul maintains that the origin of language is the speech of the individual man, and that a language has its origin every time it is

spoken. Paul also showed the fallacies contained in the *Völkerpsychologie* of Steinthal and Lazarus, demonstrating that there is no such thing as a collective soul, and that there is no language save that of the individual.

W. Wundt (1886), on the other hand, commits the error of connecting language with Ethnopsychology and other non-existent sciences, and actually terms the glorious doctrine of Herder and of Humboldt *Wundertheorie*, or theory of miracle, accusing them of mystical obscurity. Wundt confuses the question of the historical appearance of language with that of its internal nature and genesis. He looks upon the theory of evolution as having attained to its complete triumph, in its application to organic nature in general, and especially to man. He has no suspicion whatever of the function of fancy, and of the true relation between thought and expression, between expression in the naturalistic, and expression in the spiritual and linguistic sense. He looks upon speech as a specially developed form of psycho-physical vital manifestations, of expressive animal movements. Language is developed continuously from such facts, and thus is explained how, "beyond the general concept of expressive movement, there is no specific quality which delimits language in a non-arbitrary manner."

Thus the philosophy of Wundt reveals its weak side, showing itself incapable of understanding the spiritual nature of language and of art. In the *Ethic* of the same author, æsthetic facts are presented as a mixture of logical and ethical elements, a special normative æsthetic science is denied, and Æsthetic is merged in Logic and Ethic.

The neo-critical and neo-Kantian movement in thought was not able to maintain the concept of the spirit against the hedonistic, moralistic, and psychological views of Æsthetic, in vogue from about the middle of last century. Neo-criticism inherited from Kant his view as to the slight importance of the creative imagination, and appears indeed to have been ignorant of any form of knowledge, other than the intellective.

Kirchmann (1868) was one of the early adherents to psychological Æsthetic, defining the beautiful as the idealized image of pleasure, the ugly as that of pain. For him the æsthetic fact is the idealized image of the real. Failing to apprehend the true nature of the æsthetic fact, Kirchmann invented a new psychological[1] category of ideal or apparent feelings, which he thought were attenuated images from those of real life.

The aged Theodore Fischer describes Æsthetic in his auto-criticism as the union of mimetic and harmony, and the beautiful as the harmony of the universe, which is never realized in fact, because it is infinite. When we think to grasp the beautiful, we experience that exquisite illusion, which is the æsthetic fact. Robert Fischer, son of the foregoing, introduced the word *Einfühlung*, to express the vitality which he believed that man inspired into things with the help of the æsthetic process.

E. Siebeck and M. Diez, the former writing in 1875, the latter in 1892, unite a certain amount of idealistic influence, derived from Kant and Herbart, with the merely empirical and psychological views that have of late been the fashion. Diez, for instance,

would explain the artistic function as the ideal of feeling, placing it parallel to science; the ideal of thought, morality; the ideal of will and religion, the ideal of the personality. But this ideal of feeling escapes definition, and we see that these writers have not had the courage of their ideas: they have not dared to push their thought to its logical conclusion.

The merely psychological and associationist view finds in Theodore Lipps its chief exponent. He criticizes and rejects a series of æsthetic theories, such as those of play, of pleasure, of art as recognition of real life, even if disagreeable, of emotionality, of syncretism, which attaches to art a number of other ends, in addition to those of play and of pleasure.

The theory of Lipps does not differ very greatly from that of Jouffroy, for he assumes that artistic beauty is the sympathetic. "Our ego, transplanted, objectified, and recognized in others, is the object of sympathy. We feel ourselves in others, and others in us." Thus the æsthetic pleasure is entirely composed of sympathy. This extends even to the pleasure derived from architecture, geometrical forms, etc. Whenever we meet with the positive element of human personality, we experience this feeling of beatitude, which is the æsthetic emotion. But the value of the personality is an ethical value: the whole sphere of ethic is included in it. Therefore all artistic or æsthetic pleasure is the enjoyment of something which has ethical value, but this value is not an element of a compound, but the object of æsthetic intuition. Thus is æsthetic activity deprived of all autonomous existence and reduced to a mere retainer of Ethic.

C. Groos (1895) shows some signs of recognizing æsthetic activity as a theoretic value. Feeling and intellect, he says, are the two poles of knowledge, and he recognizes the æsthetic fact as internal imitation. Everything beautiful belongs to æstheticity, but not every æsthetic fact is beautiful. The beautiful is the representation of sensible pleasure, and the ugly of sensible displeasure. The sublime is the representation of something powerful, in a simple form. The comic is the representation of an inferiority, which provokes in us the pleasurable feeling of "superiority." Groos very wisely makes mock of the supposed function of the Ugly, which Hartmann and Schasler had inherited and developed from a long tradition. Lipps and Groos agree in denying æsthetic value to the comic, but Lipps, although he gives an excellent analysis of the comic, is nevertheless in the trammels of his moralistic thesis, and ends by sketching out something resembling the doctrine of the overcoming of the ugly, by means of which may be attained a higher æsthetic and (sympathetic) value.

Labours such as those of Lipps have been of value, since they have cleared away a number of errors that blocked the way, and restrained speculation to the field of the internal consciousness. Similar is the merit of E. Véron's treatise (1883) on the double form of Æsthetic, in which he combats the academic view of the absolute beauty, and shows that Taine confuses Art and Science, Æsthetic and Logic. He acutely remarks that if the object of art were to reveal the essence of things, the greatest artists would be those who best succeeded in doing this, and the greatest works would all be *identical*; whereas we know that

the very opposite is the case. Véron was a precursor of Guyau, and we seek for scientific system in vain in his book. Véron looks upon art as two things: the one *decorative*, pleasing eye and ear, the other *expressive*, "l'expression émue de la personalité humaine." He thought that decorative art prevailed in antiquity, expressive art in modern times.

We cannot here dwell upon the æsthetic theories of men of letters, such as that of E. Zola, developing his thesis of natural science and history mixed, which is known as that of the human document or as the experimental theory, or of Ibsen and the moralization of the art problem, as presented by him and by the Scandinavian school. Perhaps no French writer has written more profoundly upon art than Gustave Flaubert. His views are contained in his Correspondence, which has been published. L. Tolstoï wrote his book on art while under the influence of Véron and his hatred of the concept of the beautiful. Art, he says, communicates the feelings, as the word communicates the thoughts. But his way of understanding this may be judged from the comparison which he institutes between Art and Science. According to this, "Art has for its mission to make assimilable and sensible what may not have been assimilated in the form of argument. There is no science for science's sake, no art for art's sake. Every human effort should be directed toward increasing morality and suppressing violence. This amounts to saying that well-nigh all the art that the world has hitherto seen is false. Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Dante, Tasso, Milton, Shakespeare, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Bach, Beethoven, are all,

according to Tolstoï, "false reputations, made by the critics."

We must also class F. Nietzsche with the artists, rather than with the philosophers. We should do him an injustice (as with J. Ruskin) were we to express in intellectual terminology his æsthetic affirmations. The criticism which they provoke would be too facile. Nowhere has Nietzsche given a complete theory of art, not even in his first book, *Die Geburt der Tragödie oder Griechentum und Pessimismus.* What seems to be theory there, is really the confession of the feelings and aspirations of the writer. Nietzsche was the last, splendid representative of the romantic period. He was, therefore, deeply preoccupied with the art problem and with the relation of art to natural science and to philosophy, though he never succeeded in definitely fixing those relations. From Romanticism, rather than from Schopenhauer, he gathered those elements of thought out of which he wove his conception of the two forms of art: the Apollonian, all serene contemplation, as expressed in the epic and in sculpture; the Dionysaïc, all tumult and agitation, as expressed in music and the drama. These doctrines are not rigorously proved, and their power of resistance to criticism is therefore but slender, but they serve to transport the mind to a more lofty spiritual level than any others of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The most noteworthy thought on æsthetic of this period is perhaps to be found among the æstheticians of special branches of the arts, and since we know that laws relating only to special branches are not conceivable, this thought may be considered as bearing upon the general theory of Æsthetic.

The Bohemian critic E. Hanslick (1854) is perhaps the most important of these writers. His work *On Musical Beauty* has been translated into several languages. His polemic is chiefly directed against R. Wagner and the pretension of finding in music a determined content of ideas and feelings. He expresses equal contempt for those sentimentalists who derive from music merely pathological effects, passionate excitement, or stimulus for practical activity, in place of enjoying the musical works. "If a few Phrygian notes sufficed to instil courage into the soldier facing the enemy, or a Doric melody to assure the fidelity of a wife whose husband was absent, then the loss of Greek music may cause pain to generals and to husbands, but æstheticians and composers will have no reason to deplore it." "If every Requiem, every lamenting Adagio, possessed the power to make us sad, who would be able to support existence in such conditions? But if a true musical work look upon us with the clear and brilliant eyes of beauty, we feel ourselves bound by its invincible fascination, though its theme be all the sorrows of the century."

For Hanslick, the only end of music was form, or musical beauty. The followers of Herbart showed themselves very tender towards this unexpected and vigorous ally, and Hanslick, not to be behindhand in politeness, returned their compliments, by referring to Herbart and to R. Zimmermann, in the later editions of his work, as having "completely developed the great æsthetic principle of form." Unfortunately Hanslick meant something altogether different from the Herbartians by his use of the word form. Symmetry, merely acoustic relations, and the pleasure

of the ear, did not constitute the musically beautiful for him. Mathematics were in his view useless in the Æsthetic of music. "Sonorous forms are not empty, but perfectly full; they cannot be compared to simple lines enclosing a space; they are the spirit, which takes form, making its own bodily configuration. Music is more of a picture than is an arabesque; but it is a picture of which the subject is inexpressible in words, nor is it to be enclosed in a precise concept. In music, there is a meaning and a connexion, but of a specially musical nature: it is a language which we speak and understand, but which it is impossible to translate." Hanslick admits that music, if it do not render the quality of sentiments, renders their tone or dynamic side; it renders adjectives, if it fail to render substantives; if not "murmuring tenderness" or "impetuous courage," at any rate the "murmuring" and the "impetuous."

The essence of his book is contained in the negation that it is possible to separate form and content in music. "Take any motive you will, and say where form begins and content ends. Are we to call the sounds content? Very good, but they have already received form. What are we to call form? Sounds again? But they are already form filled, that is to say, possessing a content." These observations testify to an acute penetration of the nature of art. Hanslick's belief that they were characteristics peculiar to music, not common to every form of art, alone prevented him from seeing further.

C. Fiedler, published in German (in 1887) an extremely luminous work on the origin of artistic activity. He describes eloquently how the passive

spectator seems to himself to grasp all reality, as the shows of life pass before him; but at the moment that he tries to realize this artistically, all disappears, and leaves him with the emptiness of his own thoughts. Yet by concentration alone do we attain to expression; art is a language that we gradually learn to speak. Artistic activity is only to be attained by limiting ourselves; it must consist of "forms precisely determined, tangible, sensibly demonstrable, precisely because it is spiritual." Art does not imitate nature, for what is nature, but that vast confusion of perceptions and representations that were referred to above? Yet in a sense art does imitate nature; it uses nature to produce values of a kind peculiar to itself. Those values are true visibility.

Fiedler's views correspond with those of his predecessor, Hanslick, but are more rigorously and philosophically developed. The sculptor A. Hildebrand may be mentioned with these, as having drawn attention to the nature of art as architectonic rather than imitative, with special application to the art of sculpture.

What we miss with these and with other specialists, is a broad view of art and language, as one and the same thing, the inheritance of all humanity, not of a few persons, specially endowed. H. Bergson in his book on laughter (1900) falls under the same criticism. He develops his theory of art in a manner analogous to Fiedler, and errs like him in looking upon it as something different and exceptional in respect to the language of every moment. He declares that in life the individuality of things escapes us: we see only as much as suffices for our practical ends. The influence

of language aids this rude simplification: all but proper names are abstractions. Artists arise from time to time, who recover the riches hidden beneath the labels of ordinary life.

Amid the ruin of idealist metaphysics, is to be desired a healthy return to the doctrine of Baumgarten, corrected and enriched with the discoveries that have been made since his time, especially by romanticism and psychology. C. Hermann (1876) announced this return, but his book is a hopeless mixture of empirical precepts and of metaphysical beliefs regarding Logic and Æsthetic, both of which, he believes, deal not with the empirical thought and experience of the soul, but with the pure and absolute.

B. Bosanquet (1892) gives the following definition of the beautiful, as "that which has a characteristic or individual expressivity for the sensible perception, or for the imagination, subject to the conditions of general or abstract expressivity for the same means." The problem as posed by this writer by the antithesis of the two German schools of form and content, appears to us insoluble.

Though De Sanctis left no school in Italy, his teaching has been cleared of the obscurities that had gathered round it during the last ten years; and the thesis of the true nature of history, and of its nature, altogether different from natural science, has been also dealt with in Germany, although its precise relation to the æsthetic problem has not been made clear. Such labours and such discussions constitute a more favourable ground for the scientific development of Æsthetic than the stars of mystical metaphysic or the stables of positivism and of sensualism.

We have now reached the end of the inquiry into the history of æsthetic speculation, and we are struck with the smallness of the number of those who have seen clearly the nature of the problem. No doubt, amid the crowd of artists, critics, and writers on other subjects, many have incidentally made very just remarks, and if all these were added to the few philosophers, they would form a gallant company. But if, as Schiller truly observed, the rhythm of philosophy consist in a withdrawal from public opinion, in order to return to it with renewed vigour, it is evident that this withdrawal is essential, and indeed that in it lies the whole progress of philosophy.

During our long journey, we have witnessed grave aberrations from the truth, which were at the same time attempts to reach it; such were the hedonism of the sophists and rhetoricians of antiquity, of the sensualists of the eighteenth and second half of the nineteenth centuries; the moralistic hedonism of Aristophanes and the Stoics, of the Roman eclectics, of the writers of the Middle Age and of the Renaissance; the ascetic and logical hedonism of Plato and the Fathers of the Church; the æsthetic mysticism of Plotinus, reborn to its greatest triumphs, during the classic period of German thought.

Through the midst of these variously erroneous theories, that traverse the field of thought in all directions, runs a tiny rivulet of golden truth. Starting from the subtle empiricism of Aristotle, it flows in the profound penetration of Vico to the nineteenth century, where it appears again in the masterly analyses of Schleiermacher, Humboldt, and De Sanctis.

This brief list shows that the science of Æsthetic is

no longer to be discovered, but it also shows *that it is only at its beginning.*

The birth of a science is like the birth of a human being. In order to live, a science, like a man, has to withstand a thousand attacks of all sorts. These appear in the form of errors, which must be extirpated, if the science is not to perish. And when one set has been weeded, another crops up; when these have been dealt with, the former errors often return. Therefore *scientific criticism* is always necessary. No science can repose on its laurels, complete, unchallenged. Like a human being, it must maintain its position by constant efforts, constant victories over error. The general errors which reveal a negation of the very concept of art have already been dealt with in the Historical Summary. The particular errors have been exposed in the Theory. They may be divided under three heads: (i.) Errors as to the characteristic quality of the æsthetic fact, or (ii.) as to its specific quality, or (iii.) as to its generic quality. These are contradictions of the characteristics of intuition, of theoretic contemplation, and of spiritual activity, which constitute the æsthetic fact.

The principal bar to a proper understanding of the true nature of language has been and still is Rhetoric, with the modern form it has assumed, as style. The rhetorical categories are still mentioned in treatises and often referred to, as having definite existence among the parts of speech. Side by side with such phrases goes that of the double form, or metaphor, which implies that there are two ways of saying the same thing, the one simple, the other ornate.

Kant, Herbart, Hegel, and many minor personages,

have been shown to be victims of the rhetorical categories, and in our own day we have writers in Italy and in Germany who devote much attention to them, such as R. Bonghi and G. Gröber; the latter employs a phraseology which he borrows from the modern schools of psychology, but this does not alter the true nature of his argument. De Sanctis gave perhaps the clearest and most stimulating advice in his lectures on Rhetoric, which he termed Anti-rhetoric.

But even he failed to systematize his thought, and we may say that the true critique of Rhetoric can only be made from the point of view of the æsthetic activity, which is, as we know, *one*, and therefore does not give rise to divisions, and *cannot express the same content now in one form, now in another.* Thus only can we drive away the double monster of naked form deprived of imagination, and of decorated form, which would represent something more than imagination. The same remarks apply to artistic and literary styles, and to their various laws or rules. In modern times they have generally been comprised with rhetoric, and although now discredited, they cannot be said to have altogether disappeared.

J. C. Scaliger may be entitled the protagonist of the unities in comparatively modern times: he it was who "laid the foundations of the classical Bastille," and supplied tyrants of literature, like Boileau, with some of their best weapons. Lessing opposed the French rules and restrictions with German rules and restrictions, giving as his opinion that Corneille and others had wrongly interpreted Aristotle, whose rules did not really prevent Shakespeare from being included among

correct writers! Lessing undoubtedly believed in intellectual rules for poetry. Aristotle was the tyrant, father of tyrants, and we find Corneille saying "qu'il est aisé de s'accommoder avec Aristote," much in the same way as Tartuffe makes his "accommodements avec le ciel." In the next century, several additions were made to the admitted styles, as for instance the "tragédie bourgeoise."

But these battles of the rules with one another are less interesting than the rebellion against all the rules, which began with Pietro Aretino in the sixteenth century, who makes mock of them in the prologues to his comedies. Giordano Bruno took sides against the makers of rules, saying that the rules came from the poetry, and "therefore there are as many genuses and species of true rules as there are genuses and species of true poets." When asked how the true poets are to be known, he replies, "by repeating their verses, which either cause delight, or profit, or both." Guarini, too, said that "the world judges poetry, and its sentence is without appeal."

Strangely enough, it was priest-ridden Spain that all through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries led the van of revolt against the rules and precepts of the grammarians. While Torquato Tasso remained the miserable slave of grammarians unworthy to lick the dust from his feet, Lope de Vega slyly remarked that when he wrote his comedies, he locked up the givers of precepts with six keys, that they might not reproach him. J. B. Marino declared that he knew the rules better than all the pedants in the world; "but the true rule is to know when to break the rules, in accordance with the manners of the day and the taste

of the age." Among the most acute writers of the end of the seventeenth century is to be mentioned Gravina, who well understood that a work of art must be its own criterion, and said so clearly when praising a contemporary for a work which did not enter any one of the admitted categories. Unfortunately Gravina did not clearly formulate his views.

France of the eighteenth century produced several writers like Du Bos, who declared that men will always prefer the poems that move them, to those composed according to rule. La Motte combated the unities of place and time, and Batteux showed himself liberal in respect to rules. Voltaire, although he opposed La Motte and described the three unities as the three great laws of good sense, was also capable of declaring that all styles but the tiresome are good, and that the best style is that which is best used. In England we find Home in his *Elements of Criticism* deriding the critics for asserting that there must be a precise criterion for distinguishing epic poetry from all other forms of composition. Literary compositions, he held, melt into one another, just like colours.

The literary movement of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries attacked rules of all sorts. We will not dwell upon the many encounters of these periods, nor record the names of those that conquered gloriously, or their excesses. In France the preface to the *Cromwell* of V. Hugo (1827), in Italy the *Lettera semiseria di Grisostomo*, were clarions of rebellion. The principle first laid down by A. W. Schlegel, that the form of compositions must be organic and not mechanic, resulting from the nature of the subject, from its internal development not from an

external stamp, was enunciated in Italy. Art is always a whole, a synthesis.

But it would be altogether wrong to believe that this empirical defeat of the styles and rules implied their final defeat in philosophy. Even writers who were capable of dispensing with prejudice when judging works of art, once they spoke as philosophers, were apt to reassume their belief in those categories which, empirically, they had discarded. The spectacle of these literary or rhetorical categories, raised by German philosophers to the honours of philosophical deduction, is even more amusing than that which afforded amusement to Home. The truth is that they were unable to free their æsthetic systems of intellectualism, although they proclaimed the empire of the mystic idea. Schelling (1803) at the beginning, Hartmann (1890) at the end of the century, furnish a good example of this head and tail.

Schelling, in his Philosophy of Art, declares that, historically speaking, the first place in the styles of poetry is due to Epic, but, scientifically speaking, it falls to Lyric. In truth, if poetry be the representation of the infinite in the finite, then lyric poetry, in which prevails the finite, must be its first moment. Lyric poetry corresponds to the first of the ideal series, to reflection, to knowledge; epic poetry corresponds to the second power, to action. This philosopher finally proceeds to the unification of epic and lyric poetry, and from their union he deduces the dramatic form, which is in his view "the supreme incarnation of the essence and of the *in-se* of every art."

With Hartmann, poetry is divided into poetry of declamation and poetry for reading. The first is sub-

divided into Epic, Lyric, and Dramatic; the Epic is divided into plastic epic, proper epic, pictorial epic, and lyrical epic; Lyric is divided into epical lyric, lyrical lyric, and dramatic lyric; Dramatic is divided into lyrical dramatic, epical dramatic, and dramatical dramatic. The second (readable poetry) is divided into poetry which is chiefly epical, lyrical, and dramatic, with the tertiary division of moving, comic, tragic, and humoristic; and poetry which can all be read at once, like a short story, or that requires several sittings, like a romance.

These brief extracts show of what dialectic pirouettes and sublime trivialities even philosophers are capable, when they begin to treat of the Æsthetic of the tragic, comic, and humorous. Such false distinctions are still taught in the schools of France and Germany, and we find a French critic like Ferdinand Brunetière devoting a whole volume to the evolution of literary styles or classes, which he really believes to constitute literary history. This prejudice, less frankly stated, still infests many histories of literature, even in Italy.

We believe that the falsity of these rules of classes should be scientifically demonstrated. In our Theory of Æsthetic we have shown how we believe that it should be demonstrated.

The proof of the theory of the limits of the arts has been credited to Lessing, but his merit should rather be limited to having been the first to draw attention to the problem. His solution was false, but his achievement nevertheless great, in having posed the question clearly. No one before him, in antiquity, in the Middle Age, or in modern times, had seriously asked: What is the value of the distinctions between

the arts? Which of them comes first? Which second? Leonardo da Vinci had declared his personal predilection for painting, Michael Angelo for sculpture, but the question had not been philosophically treated before Lessing.

Lessing's attention was drawn to the problem, through his desire to disprove the assertions of Spence and of the Comte de Caylus, the former in respect to the close union between poetry and painting in antiquity, the latter as believing that a poem was good according to the number of subjects which it should afford the painter. Lessing argued thus: Painting manifests itself in space, poetry in time: the mode of manifestation of painting is through objects which coexist, that of poetry through objects which are consecutive. The objects which coexist, or whose parts are coexistent, are called bodies. Bodies, then, owing to their visibility, are the true objects of painting. Objects which are consecutive, or whose parts are consecutive, are called, in general, actions. Actions, then, are the suitable object of poetry. He admitted that painting might represent an action, but only by means of bodies which make allusion to it; that poetry can represent bodies, but only by means of actions. Returning to this theme, he explained the action or movement in painting as added by our imagination. Lessing was greatly preoccupied with the naturalness and the unnaturalness of signs, which is tantamount to saying that he believed each art to be strictly limited to certain modes of expression, which are only overstepped at the cost of coherency. In the appendix to his *Laocöon*, he quotes Plutarch as saying that one should not chop wood with a key, or open the door with an

axe. He who should do so would not only be spoiling both those utensils, but would also be depriving himself of the utility of both. He believed that this applied to the arts.

The number of philosophers and writers who have attempted empirical classifications of the arts is enormous: it ranges in comparatively recent times from Lessing, by way of Schasler, Solger, and Hartmann, to Richard Wagner, whose theory of the combination of the arts was first mooted in the eighteenth century.

Lotze, while reflecting upon the futility of these attempts, himself adopts a method, which he says is the most "convenient," and thereby incurs the censure of Schasler. This method is in fact suitable for his studies in botany and in zoology, but useless for the philosophy of the spirit. Thus both these thinkers maintained Lessing's wrong principle as to the constancy, the limits, and the peculiar nature of each art.

Who among æstheticians has criticized this principle? Aristotle had a glimpse of the truth, when he refused to admit that the distinction between prose and poetry lay in an external fact, the metre. Schleiermacher seems to have been the only one who was thoroughly aware of the difficulty of the problem. In analysis, indeed, he goes so far as to say that what the arts have in common is not the external fact, which is an element of diversity; and connecting such an observation as this with his clear distinction between art and what is called technique, we might argue that Schleiermacher looked upon the divisions between the arts as non-existent. But he does not make this logical inference, and his thought upon the problem continues to be wavering and undecided. Nebulous, uncertain, and

contradictory as is this portion of Schleiermacher's theory, he has yet the great merit of having doubted Lessing's theory, and of having asked himself by what right are special arts held to be distinct in art.

Schleiermacher *absolutely denied the existence of a beautiful in nature*, and praised Hegel for having sustained this negation. Hegel did not really deserve this praise, as his negation was rather verbal than effective; but the importance of this thesis as stated by Schleiermacher is very great, in so far as he denied the existence of an objective natural beauty not produced by the spirit of man. This theory of the beautiful in nature, when taken in a metaphysical sense, does not constitute an error peculiar to æsthetic science. It forms part of a fallacious general theory, which can be criticized together with its metaphysic.

The theory of æsthetic senses, that is, of certain superior senses, such as sight and hearing, being the only ones for which æsthetic impressions exist, was debated as early as Plato. The *Hippias major* contains a discussion upon this theme, which Socrates leads to the conclusion that there exist beautiful things, which do not reach us through impressions of eye or ear. But further than this, there exist things which please the eye, but not the ear, and *vice versa*; therefore the reason of beauty cannot be visibility or audibility, but something different from, yet common to both. Perhaps this question has never been so acutely and so seriously dealt with as in this Platonic dialogue. Home, Herder, Hegel, Diderot, Rousseau, Berkeley, all dealt with the problem, but in a more or less arbitrary manner. Herder, for instance, includes touch with the higher æsthetic senses, but

Hegel removes it, as having immediate contact with matter as such, and with its immediate sensible qualities.

Schleiermacher, with his wonted penetration, saw that the problem was not to be solved so easily. He refuted the distinction between clear and confused senses. He held that the superiority of sight and hearing over the other senses lay in their free activity, in their capacity of an activity proceeding from within, and able to create forms and sounds without receiving external impressions. The eye and the ear are not merely means of perception, for in that case there could be no visual and no auditive arts. They are also functions of voluntary movements, which fill the domain of the senses. Schleiermacher, however, considered that the difference was rather one of quantity, and that we should allow to the other senses a minimum of independence.

The sensualists, as we know, maintain that all the senses are æsthetic. That is the hedonistic hypothesis, which has been dealt with and disproved in this book. We have shown the embarrassment in which the hedonists find themselves, when they have dubbed all the senses "æsthetic," or have been obliged to differentiate in an absurd manner some of the senses from the others. The only way out of the difficulty lies in abandoning the attempt to unite orders of facts so diverse as the representative form of the spirit and the conception of given physical organs or of a given material of impressions.

The origin of classes of speech and of grammatical forms is to be found in antiquity, and as regards the latter, the disputes among the Alexandrian philosophers, the analogists, and the anomalists, resulted in logic

being identified with grammar. Anything which did not seem logical was excluded from grammar as a deviation. The analogists, however, did not have it all their own way, and grammar in the modern sense of the word is a compromise between these extreme views, that is, it contains something of the thought of Chrysippus, who composed a treatise to show that the same thing can be expressed with different sounds, and of Apollonius Discolus, who attempted to explain what the rigorous analogists refused to admit into their schemes and classifications. It is only of late years that we have begun to emerge from the superstitious reverence for grammar, inherited from the Middle Age. Such writers as Pott, in his introduction to Humboldt, and Paul in his *Principien d. Sprachgeschichte*, have done good service in throwing doubt upon the absolute validity of the parts of speech. If the old superstitions still survive tenaciously, we must attribute this partly to empirical and poetical grammar, partly to the venerable antiquity of grammar itself, which has led the world to forget its illegitimate and turbid origin.

The theory of the relativity of taste is likewise ancient, and it would be interesting to know whether the saying "there's no accounting for tastes" could be traced to a merely gustatory origin. In this sense, the saying would be quite correct, as it is *quite wrong* when applied to æsthetic facts. The eighteenth century writers exhibit a piteous perplexity of thought on this subject. Home, for instance, after much debate, decides upon a common "standard of taste," which he deduces from the necessity of social life and from what he calls "a final cause." Of course it will not be an easy matter to fix this "standard of taste." As regards

moral conduct, we do not seek our models among savages, so with regard to taste, we must have recourse to those few whose taste has not been corrupted nor spoilt by pleasure, who have received good taste from nature, and have perfected it by education and by the practice of life. If after this has been done, there should yet arise disputes, it will be necessary to refer to the principles of criticism, as laid down in his book by the said Home.

We find similar contradictions and vicious circles in the *Discourse on Taste* of David Hume. We search his writings in vain for the distinctive characteristics of the man of taste, whose judgments should be final. Although he asserts that the general principles of taste are universal in human nature, and admits that no notice should be accorded to perversions and ignorance, yet there exist diversities of taste that are irreconcilable, insuperable, and blameless.

But the criticism of the sensualist and relativist positions cannot be made from the point of view of those who proclaim the absolute nature of taste and yet place it among the intellectual concepts. It has been shown to be impossible to escape from sensualism and relativity save by falling into the intellectualist error. Muratori in the eighteenth century is an instance of this. He was one of the first to maintain the existence of a rule of taste and of universal beauty. André also spoke of what appears beautiful in a work of art as being not that which pleases at once, owing to certain particular dispositions of the faculties of the soul and of the organs of the body, but that which has the right of pleasing the reason and reflection through its own excellence. Voltaire admitted an "universal

taste," which was "intellectual," as did many others. Kant appeared, and condemned alike the intellectualist and the sensualistic error; but placing the beautiful in a symbol of morality, he failed to discover the imaginative absoluteness of taste. Later speculative philosophy did not attach importance to the question.

The correct solution was slow in making its way. It lies, as we know, in the fact that to judge a work of art we must place ourselves in the position of the artist at the time of production, and that to judge is to reproduce. Alexander Pope, in his *Essay on Criticism*, was among the first to state this truth:

> A perfect judge will read each work of wit
> With the same spirit that its author writ.

Remarks equally luminous were made by Antonio Conti, Terrasson, and Heydenreich in the eighteenth century, the latter with considerable philosophical development. De Sanctis gave in his adhesion to this formula, but a true theory of æsthetic criticism had not yet been given, because for such was necessary, not only an exact conception of nature in art, but also of the relations between the æsthetic fact and its historical conditions. In more recent times has been denied the possibility of æsthetic criticism; it has been looked upon as merely individual and capricious, and historical criticism has been set up in its place. This would be better called a criticism of extrinsic erudition and of bad philosophical inspiration—positivist and materialist. The true history of literature will always require the reconstruction and then the judgment of the work of art. Those who have wished to react against such emasculated erudition have often thrown themselves

into the opposite extreme, that is, into a dogmatic, abstract, intellectualistic, or moralistic form of criticism.

This mention of the history of certain doctrines relating to Æsthetic suffices to show the range of error possible in the theory. Æsthetic has need to be surrounded by a vigilant and vigorous critical literature which shall derive from it and be at once its safeguard and its source of strength.

APPENDIX

I HERE add as an appendix, at the request of the author, a translation of his lecture which he delivered before the Third International Congress of Philosophy, at Heidelberg, on 2nd September 1908.

The reader will find that it throws a vivid light upon Benedetto Croce's general theory of Æsthetic.

PURE INTUITION AND THE LYRICAL CHARACTER OF ART.

A Lecture delivered at Heidelberg at the second general session of the Third International Congress of Philosophy.

THERE exists an *empirical* Æsthetic, which although it admits the existence of facts, called æsthetic or artistic, yet holds that they are irreducible to a single principle, to a rigorous philosophical concept. It wishes to limit itself to collecting as many of those facts as possible, and in the greatest possible variety, thence, at the most, proceeding to group them together in classes and types. The logical ideal of this school, as declared on many occcasions, is zoology or botany. This Æsthetic, when asked what art is,

replies by indicating successively single facts, and by saying: "Art is this, and this, and this too is art," and so on, indefinitely. Zoology and botany renew the representatives of fauna and of flora in the same way. They calculate that the species renewed amount to some thousand, but believe that they might easily be increased to twenty or a hundred thousand, or even to a million, or to infinity.

There is another Æsthetic, which has been called hedonistic, utilitarian, moralistic, and so on, according to its various manifestations. Its complex denomination should, however, be *practicism*, because that is precisely what constitutes its essential character. This Æsthetic differs from the preceding, in the belief that æsthetic or artistic facts are not a merely empirical or nominalistic grouping together, but that all of them possess a common foundation. Its foundation is placed in the practical form of human activity. Those facts are therefore considered, either generically, as manifestations of pleasure and pain, and therefore rather as economic facts; or, more particularly, as a special class of those manifestations; or again, as instruments and products of the ethical spirit, which subdues and turns to its own ends individual hedonistic and economic tendencies.

There is a third Æsthetic, the *intellectualist*, which, while also recognizing the reducibility of æsthetic facts to philosophical treatment, explains them as particular cases of logical thought, identifying beauty with intellectual truth; art, now with the natural sciences, now with philosophy. For this Æsthetic, what is prized in art is what is learned from it. The only distinction that it admits between art and science, or art and

philosophy, is at the most that of more or less, or of perfection and imperfection. According to this Æsthetic, art would be the whole mass of easy and popular truths; or it would be a transitory form of science, a semi-science and a semi-philosophy, preparatory to the superior and perfect form of science and of philosophy.

A fourth Æsthetic there is, which may be called *agnostic*. It springs from the criticism of the positions just now indicated, and being guided by a powerful consciousness of the truth, rejects them all, because it finds them too evidently false, and because it is too loth to admit that art is a simple fact of pleasure or pain, an exercise of virtue, or a fragmentary sketch of science and philosophy. And while rejecting them, it discovers, at the same time, that art is not now this and now that of those things, or of other things, indefinitely, but that it has its own principle and origin. However, it is not able to say what this principle may be, and believes that it is impossible to do so. This Æsthetic knows that art cannot be resolved into an empirical concept; knows that pleasure and pain are united with the æsthetic activity only in an indirect manner; that morality has nothing to do with art; that it is impossible to rationalize art, as is the case with science and philosophy, and to prove it beautiful or ugly with the aid of reason. Here this Æsthetic is content to stop, satisfied with a knowledge consisting entirely of negative terms.

Finally, there is an Æsthetic which I have elsewhere proposed to call *mystic*. This Æsthetic avails itself of those negative terms, to define art as a spiritual form without a practical character, because it

is theoretic, and without a logical or intellective form, because it is a theoretic form, differing alike from those of science and of philosophy, and superior to both. According to this view, art would be the highest pinnacle of knowledge, whence what is seen from other points seems narrow and partial; art would alone reveal the whole horizon or all the abysses of Reality.

Now, the five Æsthetics so far mentioned are not referable to contingent facts and historical epochs, as are, on the other hand, the denominations of Greek and Mediæval Æsthetic, of Renaissance and eighteenth-century Æsthetic, the Æsthetic of Wolff and of Herbart, of Vico and of Hegel. These five are, on the contrary, mental attitudes, which are found in all periods, although they have not always conspicuous representatives of the kind that are said to become historical. Empirical Æsthetic is, for example, called Burke in the eighteenth, Fechner in the nineteenth century; moralistic Æsthetic is Horace or Plutarch in antiquity, Campanella in modern times; intellectualist or logical Æsthetic is Cartesian in the seventeenth, Leibnitzian in the eighteenth, and Hegelian in the nineteenth century; agnostic Æsthetic is Francesco Patrizio at the Renaissance, Kant in the eighteenth century; mystic Æsthetic is called Neoplatonism at the end of the antique world, Romanticism at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and if it be adorned during the former period with the name of Plotinus, in the latter it will bear the name of Schelling or of Solger. And not only are those attitudes and mental tendencies common to all epochs, but they are also all found to some extent developed or indicated in every thinker, and even in every man. Thus it is somewhat difficult

to classify philosophers of Æsthetic according to one or the other category, because each philosopher also enters more or less into some other, or into all the other categories.

Nor can these five conceptions and points of view be looked upon as increasable to ten or twenty, or to as many as desired, or that I have placed them in a certain order, but that they could be capriciously placed in another order. If this were so, they would be altogether heterogeneous and disconnected among themselves, and the attempt to examine and criticize them would seem altogether desperate, as also would be that of comparing one with the other, or of stating a new one, which should dominate them all. It is precisely thus that ordinary sceptics look upon various and contrasting scientific views. They group them all in the same plane, and believing that they can increase them at will, conclude that one is as good as another, and that therefore every one is free to select that which he prefers from a bundle of falsehoods. The conceptions of which we speak are definite in number, and appear in a necessary order, which is either that here stated by me, or another which might be proposed, better than mine. This would be the necessary order, which I should have failed to realize effectively. They are connected one with the other, and in such a way that the view which follows includes in itself that which precedes it.

Thus, if the last of the five doctrines indicated be taken, which may be summed up as the proposition that art is a form of the theoretic spirit, superior to the scientific and philosophic form—and if it be submitted to analysis, it will be seen that in it is

included, in the first place, the proposition affirming the existence of a group of facts, which are called æsthetic or artistic. If such facts did not exist, it is evident that no question would arise concerning them, and that no systematization would be attempted. And this is the truth of empirical Æsthetic. But there is also contained in it the proposition: that the facts examined are reducible to a definite principle or category of the spirit. This amounts to saying, that they belong either to the practical spirit, or to the theoretical, or to one of their subforms. And this is the truth of practicist Æsthetic, which is occupied with the enquiry as to whether these ever are practical facts, and affirms that in every case they are a special category of the spirit. Thirdly, there is contained in it the proposition: that they are not practical facts, but facts which should rather be placed near the facts of logic or of thought. This is the truth of intellectualistic Æsthetic. In the fourth place, we find also the proposition; that æsthetic facts are neither practical, nor of that theoretic form which is called logical and intellective. They are something which cannot be identified with the categories of pleasure, nor of the useful, nor with those of ethic, nor with those of logical truth. They are something of which it is necessary to find a further definition. This is the truth of that Æsthetic which is termed agnostic or negative.

When these various propositions are severed from their connection; when, that is to say, the first is taken without the second, the second without the third, and so on,—and when each, thus mutilated, is confined in itself and the enquiry which awaits

prosecution is arbitrarily arrested, then each one of these gives itself out as the whole of them, that is, as the completion of the enquiry. In this way, each becomes error, and the truths contained in empiricism, in practicism, in intellectualism, in agnostic and in mystical Æsthetic, become, respectively, falsity, and these tendencies of speculation are indicated with names of a definitely depreciative colouring. Empiria becomes empiricism, the heuristic comparison of the æsthetic activity with the practical and logical, becomes a conclusion, and therefore practicism and intellectualism. The criticism which rejects false definitions, and is itself negative, affirms itself as positive and definite, becoming agnosticism; and so on.

But the attempt to close a mental process in an arbitrary manner is vain, and of necessity causes remorse and self-criticism. Thus it comes about, that each one of those unilateral and erroneous doctrines continually tends to surpass itself and to enter the stage which follows it. Thus empiricism, for example, assumes that it can dispense with any philosophical conception of art; but, since it severs art from non-art —and, however empirical it be, it will not identify a pen-and-ink sketch and a table of logarithms, as if they were just the same thing, or a painting and milk or blood (although milk and blood both possess colour) —thus empiricism too must at last resort to some kind of philosophical concept. Therefore, we see the empiricists becoming, turn and turn about, hedonists, moralists, intellectualists, agnostics, mystics, and sometimes they are even better than mystics, upholding an excellent conception of art, which can only

be found fault with because introduced surreptitiously and without justification. If they do not make that progress, it is impossible for them to speak in any way of æsthetic facts. They must return, as regards such facts, to that indifference and to that silence from which they had emerged when they affirmed the existence of these facts and began to consider them in their variety. The same may be said of all other unilateral doctrines. They are all reduced to the alternative of advancing or of going back, and in so far as they do not wish to do either, they live amid contradictions and in anguish. But they do free themselves from these, more or less slowly, and thus are compelled to advance, more or less slowly. And here we discover why it is so difficult, and indeed impossible, exactly to identify thinkers, philosophers, and writers with one or the other of the doctrines which we have enunciated, because each one of them rebels when he finds himself limited to one of those categories, and it seems to him that he is shut up in prison. It is precisely because those thinkers try to shut themselves up in a unilateral doctrine, that they do not succeed, and that they take a step, now in one direction, now in another, and are conscious of being now on this side, now on the other, of the criticisms which are addressed to them. But the critics fulfil their duty by putting them in prison, thus throwing into relief the absurdity into which they are led by their irresolution, or their resolution not to resolve.

And from this necessary connection and progressive order of the various propositions indicated arise also the resolve, the counsel, the exhortation, to "return,"

as they say, to this or that thinker, to this or that philosophical school of the past. Certainly, such returns are impossible, understood literally; they are also a little ridiculous, like all impossible attempts. We can never return to the past, precisely because it is the past. No one is permitted to free himself from the problems which are put by the present, and which he must solve with all the means of the present (which includes in it the means of the past). Nevertheless, it is a fact that the history of philosophy everywhere resounds with cries of return. Those very people who in our day deride the "return to Hume" or the "return to Kant," proceed to advise the "return to Schelling," or the "return to Hegel." This means that we must not understand those "returns" literally and in a material way. In truth, they do not express anything but the necessity and the ineliminability of the logical process explained above, for which the affirmations contained in philosophical problems appear connected with one another in such a way that the one follows the other, surpasses it, and includes it in itself. Empiricism, practicism, intellectualism, agnosticism, mysticism, are *eternal stages of the search for truth.* They are eternally relived and rethought in the truth which each contains. Thus it would be necessary for him who had not yet turned his attention to æsthetic facts, to begin by passing them before his eyes, that is to say, he must first traverse the empirical stage (about equivalent to that occupied by mere men of letters and mere amateurs of art); and while he is at this stage, he must be aroused to feel the want of a principle of explanation, by making him compare

his present knowledge with the facts, and see if they are explained by it, that is to say, if they be utilitarian and moral, or logical and intellective. Then we should drive him who has made this examination to the conclusion, that the æsthetic activity is something different from all known forms, a form of the spirit, which it yet remains to characterize. For the empiricists of Æsthetic, intellectualism and moralism represent progress; for the intellectualists, hedonistic and moralistic alike, agnosticism is progress and may be called Kant. But for Kantians, who are real Kantians (and not neo-Kantians), progress is represented by the mystical and romantic point of view; not because this comes after the doctrine of Kant chronologically, but because it surpasses it ideally. In this sense, and in this sense alone, we should now "return" to the romantic Æsthetic. We should return to it, because it is ideally superior to all the researches in Æsthetic made in the studies of psychologists, of physio-psychologists, and of psycho-physiologists of the universities of Europe and of America. It is ideally superior to the sociological, comparative, prehistoric Æsthetic, which studies especially the art of savages, of children, of madmen, and of idiots. It is ideally superior also to that other Æsthetic, which has recourse to the conceptions of the genetic pleasure, of games, of illusion, of self-illusion, of association, of hereditary habit, of sympathy, of social efficiency, and so on. It is ideally superior to the attempts at logical explanation, which have not altogether ceased, even to-day, although they are somewhat rare, because, to tell the truth, fanaticism for Logic cannot be called the failing of our times.

Finally, it is ideally superior to that Æsthetic which repeats with Kant, that the beautiful is finality without the idea of end, disinterested pleasure, necessary and universal, which is neither theoretical nor practical, but participates in both forms, or combines them in itself in an original and ineffable manner. But we should return to it, bringing with us the experience of a century of thought, the new facts collected, the new problems that have arisen, the new ideas that have matured. Thus we shall return again to the stage of mystical and romantic Æsthetic, but not to the personal and historical stage of its representatives. For in this matter, at least, they are certainly inferior to us: they lived a century ago and therefore inherited so much the less of the problems and of the results of thought which day by day mankind laboriously accumulates.

They should return, but not to remain there; because, if a return to the romantic Æsthetic be advisable for the Kantians (while the idealists should not be advised to "return to Kant," that is to say, to a lower stage, which represents a recession), so those who come over, or already find themselves on the ground of mystical Æsthetic, should, on the other hand be advised to proceed yet further, in order to attain to a doctrine which represents a stage above it. This doctrine is that of the *pure intuition* (or, what amounts to the same thing, of pure expression); a doctrine which also numbers representatives in all times, and which may be said to be immanent alike in all the discourses that are held and in all the judgments that are passed upon art, as in all the best criticism and artistic and literary history.

This doctrine arises logically from the contradictions of mystical Æsthetic; I say, *logically*, because it contains in itself those contradictions and their solution; although *historically* (and this point does not at present concern us) that critical process be not always comprehensible, explicit, and apparent.

Mystical Æsthetic, which makes of art the supreme function of the theoretic spirit, or, at least, a function superior to that of philosophy, becomes involved in inextricable difficulties. How could art ever be superior to philosophy, if philosophy make of art its object, that is to say, if it place art beneath itself, in order to analyse and define it? And what could this new knowledge be, supplied by art and by the æsthetic activity, appearing when the human spirit has come full circle, after it has imagined, perceived, thought, abstracted, calculated, and constructed the whole world of thought and history?

As the result of those difficulties and contradictions, mystical Æsthetic itself also exhibits the tendency, either to surpass its boundary, or to sink below its proper level. The descent takes place when it falls back into agnosticism, affirming that art is art, that is, a spiritual form, altogether different from the others and ineffable; or worse, where it conceives art as a sort of repose or as a game; as though diversion could ever be a category and the spirit know repose! We find an attempt at overpassing its proper limit, when art is placed below philosophy, as inferior to it; but this overpassing remains a simple attempt, because the conception of art as instrument of universal truth is always firmly held; save that this instrument is declared less perfect and less efficacious than the

philosophical instrument. Thus they fall back again into intellectualism from another side.

These mistakes of mystical Æsthetic were manifested during the Romantic period in some celebrated paradoxes, such as those of *art as irony* and of the *death of art*. They seemed calculated to drive philosophers to desperation as to the possibility of solving the problem of the nature of art, since every path of solution appeared closed. Indeed, whoever reads the æstheticians of the romantic period, feels strongly inclined to believe himself at the heart of the enquiry and to nourish a confident hope of immediate discovery of the truth. Above all, the affirmation of the theoretic nature of art, and of the difference between its cognitive method and that of science and of logic, is felt as a definite conquest, which can indeed be combined with other elements, but which must not in any case be allowed to slip between the fingers. And further, it is not true that all ways of solution are closed, or that all have been attempted. There is at least one still open that can be tried; and it is precisely that for which we resolutely declare ourselves: the Æsthetic of the pure intuition.

This Æsthetic reasons as follows:—Hitherto, in all attempts to define the place of art, it has been sought, either at the summit of the theoretic spirit, above philosophy, or, at least, in the circle of philosophy itself. But is not the loftiness of the search the reason why no satisfactory result has hitherto been obtained? Why not invert the attempt, and instead of forming the hypothesis that art is *one of the summits or the highest grade* of the theoretic spirit, form the very opposite hypothesis, namely,

that it is *one of the lower grades*, or the lowest of all? Perhaps such epithets as "lower" and "lowest" are irreconcilable with the dignity and with the splendid beauty of art? But in the philosophy of the spirit, such words as lowest, weak, simple, elementary, possess only the value of a scientific terminology. All the forms of the spirit are necessary, and the higher is so only because there is the lower, and the lower is as much to be despised or less to be valued to the same extent as the first step of a stair is despicable, or of less value in respect to the topmost step.

Let us compare art with the various forms of the theoretic spirit, and let us begin with the sciences which are called *natural* or *positive*. The Æsthetic of pure intuition makes it clear that the said sciences are more *complex* than History, because they presuppose historical material, that is, collections of things that have happened (to men or animals, to the earth or to the stars). They submit this material to a further treatment, which consists in the abstraction and systematization of the historical facts. *History*, then, is less complex than the natural sciences. History further presupposes the world of the imagination and the pure philosophical concepts or categories, and produces its judgments or historical propositions, by means of the synthesis of the imagination with the concept. And *Philosophy* may be said to be even less complex than History, in so far as it is distinguished from the former as an activity whose special function it is to make clear the categories or pure concepts, neglecting, in a certain sense at any rate, the world of phenomena. If we compare *Art* with the three forms above mentioned, it must be declared inferior, that is

to say, less complex than the *natural Sciences*, in so far as it is altogether without abstractions. In so far as it is without conceptual determinations and does not distinguish between the real and the unreal, what has really happened and what has been dreamed, it must be declared inferior to *History*. In so far as it fails altogether to surpass the phenomenal world, and does not attain to the definitions of the pure concepts, it is inferior to *Philosophy* itself. It is also inferior to *Religion*, assuming that religion is (as it is) a form of speculative truth, standing between thought and imagination. Art is governed entirely by imagination; its only riches are images. Art does not classify objects, nor pronounce them real or imaginary, nor qualify them, nor define them. Art feels and represents them. Nothing more. Art therefore is *intuition*, in so far as it is a mode of knowledge, not abstract, but concrete, and in so far as it uses the real, without changing or falsifying it. In so far as it apprehends it immediately, before it is modified and made clear by the concept, it must be called *pure intuition*.

The strength of art lies in being thus simple, nude, and poor. Its strength (as often happens in life) arises from its very weakness. Hence its fascination. If (to employ an image much used by philosophers for various ends) we think of man, in the first moment that he becomes aware of theoretical life, with mind still clear of every abstraction and of every reflexion, in that first purely intuitive instant he must be a poet. He contemplates the world with ingenuous and admiring eyes; he sinks and loses himself altogether in that contemplation. By creating the first repre-

sentations and by thus inaugurating the life of knowledge, art continually renews within our spirit the aspects of things, which thought has submitted to reflexion, and the intellect to abstraction. Thus art perpetually makes us poets again. Without art, thought would lack the stimulus, the very material, for its hermeneutic and critical labour. Art is the root of all our theoretic life. To be the root, not the flower or the fruit, is the function of art. And without a root, there can be no flower and no fruit.

II

Such is the theory of art as pure intuition, in its fundamental conception. This theory, then, takes its origin from the criticism of the loftiest of all the other doctrines of Æsthetic, from the criticism of mystical or romantic Æsthetic, and contains in itself the criticism and the truth of all the other Æsthetics. It is not here possible to allow ourselves to illustrate its other aspects, such as would be those of the identity, which it lays down, between intuition and expression, between art and language. Suffice it to say, as regards the former, that he alone who divides the unity of the spirit into soul and body can have faith in a pure act of the soul, and therefore in an intuition, which should exist as an intuition, and yet be without its body, expression. Expression is the actuality of intuition, as action is of will; and in the same way as will not exercised in action is not will, so an intuition unexpressed is not an intuition. As regards the second point, I will mention in passing that, in

order to recognize the identity of art and language, it is needful to study language, not in its abstraction and in grammatical detail, but in its immediate reality, and in all its manifestations, spoken and sung, phonic and graphic. And we should not take at hazard any proposition, and declare it to be æsthetic; because, if all propositions have an æsthetic side (precisely because intuition is the elementary form of knowledge and is, as it were, the garment of the superior and more complex forms), all are not *purely* æsthetic, but some are philosophical, historical, scientific, or mathematical; some, in fact, of these are more than æsthetic or logical; they are æstheticological. Aristotle, in his time, distinguished between semantic and apophantic propositions, and noted, that if all propositions be *semantic*, not all are *apophantic*. Language is art, not in so far as it is apophantic, but in so far as it is, generically, semantic. It is necessary to note in it the side by which it is expressive, and nothing but expressive. It is also well to observe (though this may seem superfluous) that it is not necessary to reduce the theory of pure intuition, as has been sometimes done, to a historical fact or to a psychological concept. Because we recognize in poetry, as it were, the ingenuousness, the freshness, the barbarity of the spirit, it is not therefore necessary to limit poetry to youth and to barbarian peoples. Though we recognize language as the first act of taking possession of the world achieved by man, we must not imagine that language is born *ex nihilo*, once only in the course of the ages, and that later generations merely adopt the ancient instrument, applying it to a new order of things while lamenting its slight adaptability to

the usage of civilized times. Art, poetry, intuition, and immediate expression are the moment of barbarity and of ingenuousness, which perpetually recur in the life of the spirit; they are youth, that is, not chronological, but ideal. There exist very prosaic barbarians and very prosaic youths, as there exist poetical spirits of the utmost refinement and civilization. The mythology of those proud, gigantic Patagonians, of whom our Vico was wont to discourse, or of those *bons Hurons*, who were lately a theme of conversation, must be looked upon as for ever superseded.

But there arises an apparently very serious objection to the Æsthetic of pure intuition, giving occasion to doubt whether this doctrine, if it represent progress in respect to the doctrines which have preceded it, yet is also a complete and definite doctrine as regards the fundamental concept of art. Should it be submitted to a dialectic, by means of which it must be surpassed and dissolved into a more lofty point of view? The doctrine of pure intuition makes the value of art to consist of its power of intuition; in such a manner that just in so far as pure and concrete intuitions are achieved will art and beauty be achieved. But if attention be paid to judgments of people of good taste and of critics, and to what we all say when we are warmly discussing works of art and manifesting our praise or blame of them, it would seem that what we seek in art is something quite different, or at least something more than simple force and intuitive and expressive purity. What pleases and what is sought in art, what makes beat the heart and enraptures

the admiration, is life, movement, emotion, warmth, the feeling of the artist. This alone affords the supreme criterion for distinguishing true from false works of art, those with insight from the failures. Where there are emotion and feeling, much is forgiven; where they are wanting, nothing can make up for them. Not only are the most profound thoughts and the most exquisite culture incapable of saving a work of art which is looked upon as *cold*, but richness of imagery, ability and certainty in the reproduction of the real, in description, characterization and composition, and all other knowledge, only serve to arouse the regret that so great a price has been paid and such labours endured, in vain. We do not ask of an artist instruction as to real facts and thoughts, nor that he should astonish us with the richness of his imagination, but that he should have *a personality*, in contact with which the soul of the hearer or spectator may be heated. A personality of any sort is asked for in this case; its moral significance is excluded: let it be sad or glad, enthusiastic or distrustful, sentimental or sarcastic, benignant or malign, but it must be a soul. Art criticism would seem to consist altogether in determining if there be a personality in the work of art, and of what sort. A work that is a failure is an incoherent work; that is to say, a work in which no single personality appears, but a number of disaggregated and jostling personalities, that is, really, none. There is no further correct significance than this in the researches that are made as to the verisimilitude, the truth, the logic, the necessity, of a work of art.

It is true that many protests have been made by

artists, critics, and philosophers by profession, against the characteristic of *personality*. It has been maintained that the bad artist leaves traces of his personality in the work of art, whereas the great artist cancels them all. It has been further maintained that the artist should portray the reality of life, and that he should not disturb it with the opinions, judgments, and personal feelings of the author, and that the artist should give the tears of things and not his own tears. Hence *impersonality*, not personality, has been proclaimed to be the characteristic of art, that is to say, the very opposite. However, it will not be difficult to show that what is really meant by this opposing formula is the same as in the first case. The theory of impersonality really coincides with that of personality in every point. The opposition of the artists, critics, and philosophers above mentioned, was directed against the invasion by the empirical and volitional personality of the artist of the spontaneous and ideal personality which constitutes the subject of the work of art. For instance, artists who do not succeed in representing the force of piety or of love of country, add to their colourless imaginings declamation or theatrical effects, thinking thus to arouse such feelings. In like manner certain orators and actors introduce into a work of art an emotion extraneous to the work of art itself. Within these limits, the opposition of the upholders of the theory of impersonality was most reasonable. On the other hand, there has also been exhibited an altogether irrational opposition to personality in the work of art Such is the lack of comprehension and intolerance evinced by certain souls for others differently constituted (of calm for agitated souls, for example).

Here we find at bottom the claim of one sort of personality to deny that of another. Finally, it has been possible to demonstrate from among the examples given of impersonal art, in the romances and dramas called naturalistic, that in so far and to the extent that these are complete artistic works, they possess personality. This holds good even when this personality lies in a wandering or perplexity of thought regarding the value to be given to life, or in blind faith in the natural sciences and in modern sociology.

Where every trace of personality was really absent, and its place taken by the pedantic quest for human documents, the description of certain social classes and the generic or individual process of certain maladies, there the work of art was absent. A work of science of more or less superficiality, and without the necessary proofs and control, filled its place. There is no upholder of impersonality but experiences a feeling of fatigue for a work of the utmost exactitude in the reproduction of reality in its empirical sequence, or of industrious and apathetic combination of images. He asks himself why such a work was executed, and recommends the author to adopt some other profession, since that of artist was not intended for him.

Thus it is without doubt that if pure intuition (and pure expression, which is the same thing) are indispensable in the work of art, the personality of the artist is equally indispensable. If (to quote the celebrated words in our own way) the *classic* moment of perfect representation or expression be necessary for the work of art, the *romantic* moment of feeling is not less necessary. Poetry, or art in general, cannot be exclusively *ingenuous* or *sentimental*; it must be both

ingenuous and sentimental. And if the first or representative moment be termed *epic*, and the second, which is sentimental, passionate, and personal, be termed *lyric*, then poetry and art must be at once epic and lyric, or, if it please you better, *dramatic*. We use these words here, not at all in their empirical and intellectualist sense, as employed to designate special classes of works of art, exclusive of other classes; but in that of elements or moments, which must of necessity be found united in every work of art, how diverse soever it may be in other respects.

Now this irrefutable conclusion seems to constitute exactly that above-mentioned apparently serious objection to the doctrine which defines art as pure intuition. But if the essence of art be merely theoretic—and it is *intuibility*—can it, on the other hand, be practical, that is to say, feeling, personality, and *passionality*? Or, if it be practical, how can it be theoretic? It will be answered that feeling is the *content*, intuibility the *form*; but form and content do not in philosophy constitute a duality, like water and its recipient; in philosophy content is form, and form is content. Here, on the other hand, form and content appear to be different from one another; the content is of one quality, the form of another. Thus art appears to be the sum of two qualities, or, as Herbart used to say in his time, of *two values*. Accordingly we have an altogether unmaintainable Æsthetic, as is clear from recent largely vulgarized doctrines of Æsthetic as operating with the concept of the *infused personality*. Here we find, on the one hand, things intuible lying dead and soulless; on the other, the artist's feeling and personality. The artist is then supposed to put himself into things, by

an act of magic, to make them live and palpitate, love and adore. But if we start with the *distinction*, we can never again reach *unity*: the distinction requires an intellectual act, and what the intellect has divided intellect or reason alone, not art or imagination, can reunite and synthetize. Thus the Æsthetic of infusion or transfusion—when it does not fall into the antiquated hedonistic doctrines of agreeable illusion, of games, and generally of what affords a pleasurable emotion; or of moral doctrines, where art is a symbol and an allegory of the good and the true;—is yet not able, despite its airs of modernity and its psychology, to escape the fate of the doctrine which makes of art a semi-imaginative conception of the world, like religion. The process that it describes is mythological, not æsthetic; it is a making of gods or of idols. "To make one's gods is an unhappy art," said an old Italian poet; but if it be not unhappy, certainly it is not poetic and not æsthetic. The artist does not make the gods, because he has other things to do. Another reason is that, to tell the truth, he is so ingenuous and so absorbed in the image that attracts him, that he cannot perform that act of abstraction and conception, wherein the image must be surpassed and made the allegory of a universal, though it be of the crudest description.

This recent theory, then, is of no use. It leads back to the difficulties arising from the admission of two characteristics of art, *intuibility and lyricism*, not unified. We must recognize, either that the duality must be destroyed and proved illusory, *or* that we must proceed to a more ample conception of art, in which that of pure intuibility would remain merely secondary or particular. And to destroy and prove

it illusory must consist in showing that here too form is content, and that pure intuition is *itself* lyricism.

Now, the truth is precisely this: *pure intuition is essentially lyricism.* All the difficulties concerning this question arise from not having thoroughly understood that concept, from having failed to penetrate its true nature and to explore its multiple relations. When we consider the one attentively, we see the other bursting from its bosom, or better, the one and the other reveal themselves as one and the same, and we escape from the desperate trilemma, of either denying the lyrical and personal character of art, or of asserting that it is adjunctive, external and accidental, or of excogitating a new doctrine of Æsthetic, which we do not know where to find. In fact, as has already been remarked, what can pure intuition mean, but intuition pure of every abstraction, of every conceptual element, and, for this reason, neither science, history, nor philosophy? This means that the content of the pure intuition cannot be either an abstract concept, or a speculative concept or idea, or a conceptualized, that is historicized, representation. Nor can it be a so-called perception, which is a representation intellectually, and so historically, discriminated. But outside logic in its various forms and blendings, no other psychic content remains, save that which is called appetites, tendencies, feelings, and will. These things are all the same and constitute the practical form of the spirit, in its infinite gradations and in its dialectic (pleasure and pain). Pure intuition, then, since it does not produce concepts, must represent the will in its manifestations, that is to say, it can represent nothing but *states of the soul.* And states of the soul are

passionality, feeling, personality, which are found in every art and determine its lyrical character. Where this is absent, art is absent, *precisely because pure intuition is absent*, and we have at the most, in exchange for it, *that reflex*, philosophical, historical, or scientific. In the last of these, passion is represented, not immediately, but mediately, or, to speak exactly, it is no longer represented, but thought. Thus the origin of language, that is, its true nature, has several times been placed in *interjection*. Thus, too, Aristotle, when he wished to give an example of those propositions which were not *apophantic*, but generically *semantic* (we should say, not logical, but purely Æsthetic), and did not predicate the logically true and false, but nevertheless said something, gave as example invocation or prayer, ἡ εὐχή. He added that these propositions do not appertain to Logic, but to Rhetoric and Poetic. A landscape is a state of the soul; a great poem may all be contained in an exclamation of joy, of sorrow, of admiration, or of lament. The more objective is a work of art, by so much the more is it poetically suggestive.

If this deduction of lyricism from the intimate essence of pure intuition do not appear easily acceptable, the reason is to be sought in two very deep-rooted prejudices, of which it is useful to indicate here the genesis. The first concerns the nature of the *imagination*, and its likenesses to and differences from *fancy*. Imagination and fancy have been clearly distinguished thus by certain æstheticians (and among them, De Sanctis), as also in discussions relating to concrete art: they have held fancy, not imagination, to be the special faculty of the poet and the artist. Not

only does a new and bizarre combination of images, which is vulgarly called *invention*, not constitute the artist, but *ne fait rien à l'affaire*, as Alceste remarked with reference to the length of time expended upon writing a sonnet. Great artists have often preferred to treat groups of images, which had already been many times used as material for works of art. The novelty of these new works has been solely that of art or form, that is to say, of the new *accent* which they have known how to give to the old material, of the new way in which they have *felt* and therefore *intuified* it, thus creating *new images* upon the old ones. These remarks are all obvious and universally recognized as true. But if mere imagination as such has been excluded from art, it has not therefore been excluded from the theoretic spirit. Hence the disinclination to admit that a pure intuition must of necessity express a state of the soul, whereas it may also consist, as they believe, of a pure image, without a content of feeling. If we form an arbitrary image of any sort, *stans pede in uno*, say of a bullock's head on a horse's body, would not this be an intuition, a pure intuition, certainly quite without any content of reflexion? Would one not attain to a work of art in this way, or at any rate to an artistic motive? Certainly not. For the image given as an instance, and every other image that may be produced by the imagination, not only is not a pure intuition, but it is not a *theoretic* product of any sort. It is a product of *choice*, as was observed in the formula used by our opponents; and choice is external to the world of thought and contemplation. It may be said that imagination is a practical artifice or game, played upon that patrimony of images

possessed by the soul; whereas the fancy, the translation of practical into theoretical values, of states of the soul into images, is the *creation* of that patrimony itself.

From this we learn that an image, which is not the expression of a state of the soul, is not an image, since it is without any theoretical value; and therefore it cannot be an obstacle to the identification of lyricism and intuition. But the other prejudice is more difficult to eradicate, because it is bound up with the metaphysical problem itself, on the various solutions of which depend the various solutions of the æsthetic problem, and *vice versa.* If art be intuition, would it therefore be any intuition that one might have of a *physical* object, appertaining to *external nature*? If I open my eyes and look at the first object that they fall upon, a chair or a table, a mountain or a river, shall I have performed by so doing an æsthetic act? If so, what becomes of the lyrical character, of which we have asserted the necessity? If not, what becomes of the intuitive character, of which we have affirmed the equal necessity and also its identity with the former? Without doubt, the perception of a physical object, as such, does not constitute an artistic fact; but precisely for the reason that it is not a pure intuition, but a judgment of perception, and implies the application of an abstract concept, which in this case is physical or belonging to external nature. And with this reflexion and perception, we find ourselves at once outside the domain of pure intuition. We could have a pure perception of a physical object in one way only; that is to say, if physical or external nature were a metaphysical reality, a truly real reality, and not, as it is, a

construction or abstraction of the intellect. If such were the case, man would have an immediate intuition, in his first theoretical moment, both of himself and of external nature, of the spiritual and of the physical, in an equal degree. This represents the dualistic hypothesis. But just as dualism is incapable of providing a coherent system of philosophy, so is it incapable of providing a coherent Æsthetic. If we admit dualism, we must certainly abandon the doctrine of art as pure intuition; but we must at the same time abandon all philosophy. But art on its side tacitly protests against metaphysical dualism. It does so, because, being the most immediate form of knowledge, it is in contact with activity, not with passivity; with interiority, not exteriority; with spirit, not with matter, and never with a double order of reality. Those who affirm the existence of two forms of intuition—the one external or physical, the other subjective or æsthetic; the one cold and inanimate, the other warm and lively; the one imposed from without, the other coming from the inner soul—attain without doubt to the distinctions and oppositions of the vulgar (or dualistic) consciousness, but their Æsthetic is vulgar.

The lyrical essence of pure intuition, and of art, helps to make clear what we have already observed concerning the persistence of the intuition and of the fancy in the higher grades of the theoretical spirit, why philosophy, history, and science have always an artistic side, and why their expression is subject to æsthetic valuation. The man who ascends from art to thought does not by so doing abandon his volitional and practical base, and therefore he too finds himself in a particular *state of the soul*, the representation of which is intuitive

and lyrical, and accompanies of necessity the development of his ideas. Hence the various styles of thinkers, solemn or jocose, troubled or gladsome, mysterious and involved, or level and expansive. But it would not be correct to divide intuition immediately into two classes, the one of *æsthetic*, the other of *intellectual* or *logical* intuitions, owing to the persistence of the artistic element in logical thought, because the relation of degrees is not the relation of classes, and copper is copper, whether it be found alone, or in combination as bronze.

Further, this close connection of feeling and intuition in pure intuition throws much light on the reasons which have so often caused art to be separated from the theoretic and confounded with the practical activity. The most celebrated of these confusions are those formulated about the relativity of tastes and of the impossibility of reproducing, tasting, and correctly judging the art of the past, and in general the art of others. A life lived, a feeling felt, a volition willed, are certainly impossible to reproduce, because nothing happens more than once, and my situation at the present moment is not that of any other being, nor is it mine of the moment before, nor will be of the moment to follow. But art remakes ideally, and ideally expresses my momentary situation. Its image, produced by art, becomes separated from time and space, and can be again made and again contemplated in its ideal-reality from every point of time and space. It belongs not to the *world*, but to the *superworld*; not to the flying moment, but to eternity. Thus life passes, but art endures.

Finally, we obtain from this relation between the

intuition and the state of the soul the criterion of exact definition of the *sincerity* required of artists, which is itself also an essential request. It is essential, precisely because it means that the artist must have a state of the soul to express, which really amounts to saying, that he must be an artist. His must be a state of the soul really experienced, not merely imagined, because imagination, as we know, is not a work of truth. But, on the other hand, the demand for sincerity does not go beyond asking for a state of the soul, and that the state of soul expressed in the work of art be a desire or an action. It is altogether indifferent to Æsthetic whether the artist have had only an aspiration, or have realized that aspiration in his empirical life. All that is quite indifferent in the sphere of art. Here we also find the confutation of that false conception of sincerity, which maintains that the artist, in his volitional or practical life, should be at one with his dream, or with his incubus. Whether or no he have been so, is a matter that interests his biographer, not his critic; it belongs to history, which separates and qualifies that which art does not discriminate, but represents.

III

This attitude of indiscrimination and indifference, observed by art in respect to history and philosophy, is also foreshadowed at that place of the *De interpretatione* (*c.* 4), to which we have already referred, to obtain thence the confirmation of the thesis of the identity of art and language, and another confirmation,

that of the identity of lyric and pure intuition. It is a really admirable passage, containing many profound truths in a few short, simple words, although, as is natural, without full consciousness of their richness. Aristotle, then, is still discussing the said rhetorical and poetical propositions, semantic and not apophantic, and he remarks that in them there rules no distinction between true and false: *τὸ ἀληθεύειν ἢ ψεύδεσθαι οὐκ ὑπάρχει.* Art, in fact, is in contact with palpitating reality, but does not know that it is so in contact, and therefore is not truly in contact. Art does not allow itself to be troubled with the abstractions of the intellect, and therefore does not make mistakes; but it does not know that it does not make mistakes. If art, then (to return to what we said at the beginning), be the first and most ingenuous form of knowledge, it cannot give complete satisfaction to man's need to know, and therefore cannot be the ultimate end of the theoretic spirit. Art is the dream of the life of knowledge. Its complement is waking, lyricism no longer, but the concept; no longer the dream, but the judgment. Thought could not be without fancy; but thought surpasses and contains in itself the fancy, transforms the image into perception, and gives to the world of dream the clear distinctions and the firm contours of reality. Art cannot achieve this; and however great be our love of art, that cannot raise it in rank, any more than the love one may have for a beautiful child can convert it into an adult. We must accept the child as a child, the adult as an adult.

Therefore, the Æsthetic of pure intuition, while it proclaims energetically the autonomy of art and of the æsthetic activity, is at the same time averse to all

æstheticism, that is, to every attempt at lowering the life of thought, in order to elevate that of fancy. The origin of æstheticism is the same as that of mysticism. Both proceed from a rebellion against the predominance of the abstract sciences and against the undue abuse of the principle of causation in metaphysic. When we pass from the stuffed animals of the zoological museums, from anatomical reconstructions, from tables of figures, from classes and sub-classes constituted by means of abstract characters, or from the fixation and mechanization of life for the ends of naturalistic science, to the pages of the poets, to the pictures of the painters, to the melodies of the composers, when in fact we look upon life with the eye of the artist, we have the impression that we are passing from death to life, from the abstract to the concrete, from fiction to reality. We are inclined to proclaim that only in art and in æsthetic contemplation is truth, and that science is either charlatanesque pedantry, or a modest practical expedient. And certainly art has the superiority of its own truth ; simple, small, and elementary though it be, over the abstract, which, as such, is altogether without truth. But in violently rejecting science and frantically embracing art, that very form of the theoretic spirit is forgotten, by means of which we can criticize science and recognize the nature of art. Now this theoretic spirit, since it criticizes science, is not science, and, as reflective consciousness of art, is not art. Philosophy, the supreme fact of the theoretic world, is forgotten. This error has been renewed in our day, because the consciousness of the limits of the natural sciences and of the value of the truth which belongs to intuition and to art, have been renewed. But just as, a

century ago, during the idealistic and romantic period, there were some who reminded the fanatics for art, and the artists who were transforming philosophy, that art was not "the most lofty form of apprehending the Absolute"; so, in our day, it is necessary to awaken the consciousness of Thought. And one of the means for attaining this end is an exact understanding of the limits of art, that is, the construction of a solid Æsthetic.

THE END

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